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# THE A. B. C. OF CIVICS

*By*

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## PREFACE

This little book is intended to serve as an introduction to the study of Civics. The treatment is objective and concrete rather than abstract and philosophical. Some of the conclusions, briefly stated here, have been worked out at greater length in my "Democratic Process" which is to be published shortly. I am indebted to Mr. Ilyas Ahmad, M.A., of the Politics Department, University of Allahabad, for seeing the book through the press.

BENI PRASAD



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## CHAPTER I

### THE SCOPE AND METHOD OF CIVICS

SCIENCE has been defined as systematised knowledge. In ultimate analysis all knowledge is one. It follows that there is a fundamental unity underlying that part of knowledge which has been reduced to system and which is designated as science. For purposes of study and investigation, however, it has been found necessary to divide Science into various classes and branches. In recent times the scientific data have grown to vast proportions. Hence, the classification of science has been carried to great lengths. So, we have a large number of *sciences*. Besides, there are other disciplines which are not sciences in the strict sense of the term but which are related to sciences. They have also been divided and subdivided.

But there is no standard and uniform classification of sciences and allied studies. It varies accordingly to the purpose in view. From the standpoint of Civics, it is not necessary to discuss the place of such abstract disciplines as Logic and Pure Mathematics in the scheme of knowledge. It is enough to start by pointing to the three well-known series of sciences, viz., Physical, Biological and Social.

The Physical Sciences, such as Physics, Chemistry, Geology and Astronomy deal primarily with inanimate substances. They are related to one another. There is also a close interrelation between them and the Biological Sciences. The latter, that is to say, Botany and Zoology, are concerned

with plants and animals respectively. Now, living beings are subject to the laws of the physical universe. They absorb various substances and present a chemistry of their own. Accordingly, Botany and Zoology presuppose the principles of the Physical Sciences and constantly draw upon them. Next, it is patent that the life of plants is dove-tailed into that of animals. Botany and Zoology are intertwined together. *Thirdly*, there is a very intimate connection between the Biological Sciences on the one hand and the Social Sciences which deal with Man, on the other. Man is an animal and shares many characteristics with other species, specially the mammals. There are biological generalisations which are applicable more or less to man. Besides, man has domesticated, or at any rate acquired control over, numerous species of plants and animals and altered their tenor of life which the biologist studies. The fauna and the flora, in their turn, have determined the character of man's sustenance, shelter and occupations and have, therefore, profoundly influenced his whole career. At bottom, the study of plants, animals and man constitutes a single Science of Life.

The interrelations of the sciences are well illustrated by those disciplines which fall under more than one class and which constitute, so to say, borderland Borderland Sciences. sciences. Thus, Geography is concerned not merely with the physical aspects of the earth but also with their influence on the character and distribution of plants and animals. It goes further and traces the influence of the physical environment on human thought, occupations and institutions. It partakes of the character of a physical, a biological and a human science. Another illustration is furnished by Psychology which studies certain aspects of the lives both of animals and of men.

The sciences dealing with man are called Social because man has always lived, and can live, only in society. There are, indeed, many animals who also live in society but their social life does not show the same high development as that of man. The Social Sciences treat of a phase of life which is dynamic and extremely complex and varied. They cannot attain to the exactitude of the Physical or even of the Biological sciences. Indeed, there are scientists who refuse to recognise them as sciences. However, since they partly follow the same methods as the Physical and Biological sciences and endeavour to be as systematic as possible, they ought to be called sciences.

The Social Sciences treat of various aspects of human behaviour in society—thought, feeling, action, organisation, etc. Thus, Sociology deals with social development in general and analyses the groundwork of social life. Psychology seeks to unravel the workings of the human mind—of the various impulses, emotions, thought, imagination, willing etc., and their interactions. Anthropology investigates the early phases of human development and therefore pays special attention to primitive peoples. Ethnology occupies itself with races in general and studies their characteristics. Then there is the science of ethics which deals with motives, attitudes and principles of conduct. Men have to live together. Hence, they evolve some rules and patterns of behaviour to govern their mutual relations. It is with their broader aspects that Ethics is concerned. Ethics is a social science because problems of conduct can arise only for those who live in society.

Social life raises questions of mutual adjustment at every step. Some of them call for a great deal of organisation



and regulation. They form the subject-matter of the science of Politics. In this context of social relationships, there are many duties to be performed and, correspondingly, many rights to be respected. It is with them that Civics is mainly concerned. Laws which are laid down for the guidance and regulation of the external behaviour of men towards one another are treated of by Jurisprudence.

Social life rests on material foundations, on the acquisition and use of the various means of sustenance or wealth. Economics is the science which deals with this wealth—its production, distribution, exchange and consumption. History, as it has been usually written, is not a science but it partakes of the character of a science in so far as it traces the development of institutions in the past.

None of these sciences is independent of the others. Social life has a basic unity so that the social sciences cannot be water-tight compartments. They are really different ways of looking at human phenomena and supplement to one another. For instance, Geography furnishes indispensable data to all the other social sciences. History records the events of the past, traces their casual connexions and is thus able to throw a flood of light on the subject-matter of every social science. Jurisprudence presupposes Politics. There are numerous problems common to Politics and Economics. Sociology which treats of the fundamentals of social organisation has a bearing on all other social sciences.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> As hinted above, the branches of knowledge mentioned in this and the preceding paragraph are not exhaustive. There are others like Mathematics, Logic, Theology and Metaphysics but it is not necessary for our purpose to classify them. For a full treatment of the interrelations of the Social Sciences, see "*The Social Sciences*", Ed. W. F. Ogburn and A. Goldenweiser.

Knowledge is not an end in itself. It has a bearing on human welfare. It may, indeed, be cultivated by scholars so thoroughly and disinterestedly as to appear its own reward. But ultimately it serves to influence action, to enhance control over the environment and to affect human happiness. This is true not only of the physical and biological sciences but also of the social sciences. In order to derive full benefit from science, it is necessary to harmonise and synthesise the results of diverse investigations. When science adopts such an attitude of comprehension and generality, it merges into philosophy. Apart from abstractions like Logic and Metaphysics, the difference between science and philosophy is one of degree rather than of kind. Science has more to do with investigation of facts; philosophy has more to do with their synthesis and evaluation. The term philosophy itself means love of wisdom and indicates that its purpose is to guide action wisely. Psychology, Ethics, Sociology, Jurisprudence, Politics and Civics are branches of science in so far as they investigate, compare and generalise from facts. They are branches of philosophy in so far as they bring out the inner significance of these facts and lay down rules of action. Their scientific and philosophic aspects meet when human purposes are investigated and evaluated. Between the two aspects of these disciplines no hard and fast line can be drawn.

While all the social sciences are interrelated, the connection between Politics and Civics is specially close. Partly, they cover the same ground, follow the same methods and enunciate the same kind of rules. It is, therefore, necessary to observe carefully how Politics and Civics are allied to each other

Politics.

and how they differ from each other. It is instructive to go back to the original meanings of these terms and to note their later modifications. Twenty-five centuries ago, the Greeks developed a vigorous social and political life in their cities. A city dominated a small compact territory in the neighbourhood and stood forth as an independent state. The Greek word for City was Polis. As each city was a state, the word Polis was used by the Greeks also in the sense of State. To the Greeks City and State were the same and a single term was used to denote the same idea. From Polis was derived the word Politics. Politics was the branch of knowledge and action which concerned the affairs of the city or state. The Greeks lost their independence after the 4th century B. C. but the influence of their art, literature and philosophy has continued (with some breaks) to the present day. Their word Politics has been used to denote affairs of state.

In Italy, the Romans also developed the same type of city-state and about the same time as the Greeks. Their word for city was Civitas, from which, indeed, the modern 'city' itself is derived.

Civics.

The Latin Civis meant a citizen and just as Politics referred to affairs of the city in ancient Greece, so the derivative Civics referred to affairs of the city in parts of ancient Italy. Etymologically, then, Politics and Civics mean the same thing—the science and art of public business, that is to say, of state business. The Romans have exercised profound influence over Europe and beyond and their words, Civic, Civil, etc., along with derivatives like citizen and civilisation have been in common use for centuries.

It is now easy to perceive why it has been difficult to distinguish Civics and Politics and why there must always

be a good deal of common ground between them. Both deal with man in organised political society. Accordingly, both treat of the reciprocal relations of men, associations and states. Both speak of rights and duties. Both attempt to find what conditions are favourable to the attainment of happiness, what institutions are conducive to social peace and progress and how institutions should, in practice, be worked.

The difference between Civics and Politics is one of accent and emphasis rather than of subject-matter. Politics has almost completely shaken off the old associations with city. Civics has retained those associations. Politics treats specially of national and international affairs. Civics treats specially of the affairs of the neighbourhood and carries a strong suggestion of fellow-feeling. Politics traces the evolution of political forms and institutions. Civics for the most part takes that evolution for granted. Politics lays stress primarily on rights and the ways of securing them. Civics lays stress primarily on duties and on the education and character requisite for their performance.

The scope of Civics, then, may be defined as the analysis and improvement of social life with special reference to the neighbourhood and the duties of man. It is both a science and an art in the sense that it investigates conditions and seeks to apply the results of its investigations to the furtherance of human welfare. It works in co-operation with the other social sciences, specially with Politics, and freely borrows from them all.

Civics touches human interests so intimately that its

study demands a severe intellectual and moral discipline. It calls for laborious and patient collection of facts of social life, for their classification and comparison and for strictly scientific generalisations therefrom. It is an observational study. It is not experimental, that is to say, the student of Civics cannot, like that of Physics or Chemistry, mix and separate ingredients at will in various proportions. But men have tried so many different ways of life and developed such different institutions under all skies in the past and in the present that their close study furnishes some of the advantages of experimentation. In order to grasp the full meaning of social facts, it is necessary to survey them on a comprehensive scale. Above all, it is desirable to ascertain how the mass of the people—peasants, labourers, shop-keepers etc.—live their lives and by what influences they are moved.

All social relationships represent mental interactions; in other words, they arise from the action of minds on one another. They are far more subtle, delicate and intricate than the interactions of inanimate matter or energy. It is impossible to understand their spirit and ramifications merely through the process of absorbing information from books or teachers. A passive mind can but skip over the surface of society. It requires an active and alert intelligence to pierce through appearances to realities. The proper study of Civics calls for independent thinking. The student should not be content with borrowing opinions from others. He should try to judge for himself. While thinking on social affairs, he should sedulously free his mind from all bias and prejudice. Let him not be swayed by the preconceived notions of his sect, class or caste, or by other factors in the environment.

The student of Civics is constantly called upon to un-

derstand the lives of others. It is difficult enough to know oneself. To know others is a far more arduous undertaking and can be accomplished only with the disciplined use of that faculty of the mind which is called Imagination. One should be able to put oneself in the position of others in diverse situations and to visualise the broad sweep of life and events. At the same time the imagination should not run riot and usurp the place of investigation and comparison. What is needful is the scientific imagination which welcomes facts from all quarters, carefully notes them all and is then able to illumine them by the light of general principles and to weave them into systems of thought. This is how one acquires insight and vision which are among the crowning achievements of intellectual exercise.

Akin to imagination is the moral quality of Sympathy—feeling for others or feeling like others. It is imaginative sympathy which enables one to penetrate into the joys and sorrows, the discouragements and aspirations, of others. It is specially valuable when one has to treat of those who are separated by cleavages of colour, race, nationality, class or religion. As an aid to Civic studies, sympathy must be distinguished from that maudlin sentimentality which dissolves itself in tears. Joined to understanding, sympathy should prompt a scientific search into the causes of social events and for the ways of reform.

For those beginning the study of Civics, it may be permitted to indicate a practical device for training in the scientific method of inquiry and in habits of independent thinking, imagination and sympathy. The device is welfare work, commencing with a survey and culminating in organised service. Let a small group of students select a village or a town, or an economic

group like that of factory workers, and address a well-thought out questionnaire to its members on their family budgets, social customs, occupations, educational opportunities and attainments, co-operation and litigation etc. The replies, vitalised by personal contacts, would serve to impart a fresh insight into the working of social forces. It will be deepened by voluntary service in the form of improving sanitation, running primary schools or adult schools, or relieving hardships from famine, fire, flood or epidemics. Welfare work among peasants, labourers, depressed classes and others would bring many into contact with social realities outside their daily routine and enable them better to understand the mechanism of society. Disinterested service is the school of moral education. It lifts the individual beyond himself and carries him into the life of humanity.

Pursued in the right spirit, Civics should exercise a broadening influence on the mind and a liberalising influence on the emotions. It should train the faculties for more effective participation in the larger life of society. Above all, it should deepen the sense of social responsibility and lay the foundations of a well-ordered career of social usefulness. •

The Utility of  
Civics.

## CHAPTER II

### SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

LONG ago Aristotle said that man is a social animal. The formula has been repeated times without number. Now as

Man as a Social  
animal.

ever it is necessary to understand what its exact implications are. It means that man is born in society and lives in society.

A few individuals here and there may cut themselves adrift from society for sometime but even then they retain the habits of thought and feeling, the language, and the outlook which they had acquired through social contacts. From his first appearance on earth, man has lived in society and so he is destined to live for ever.

There are three basic reasons why man must be a pre-eminently social creature. *Firstly*, he is born a helpless babe.

Helplessness  
Childhood.

of For months and years, he depends on his parents or others for sustenance, aye, for very existence. There are species of

animals whose young ones can shift for themselves a few hours or a few days after seeing the light. Yet there is a certain degree of social life among them. The prolonged dependence of the human child intensifies sociality. If children are to grow up at all, they must be tended for long; in other words, they must be brought up in society under the fostering care of elders. Society is thus indispensable to the continuation of the human race.

*Secondly*, the child, though helpless at first, is endowed



with great potentialities. He has in him the capacity to learn

**Human Capacity.** language, to inquire and think, to experience various emotions, to play and work, to help or harm others and so on. All these capacities, however, depend for their expression on social stimulus. The mind, in fact, is a social product, that is, it can develop only in society. One can learn to speak only in association with others. It is said that the Emperor Akbar deprived a few infants of all chance of listening to human speech, in order to discover what natural language they would speak. After four years, the children came out—dumb. A similar fate befalls the rare children who are carried off and brought up by wolves. When recovered by chance, they are found to be unable to speak, think or feel like human beings. The reason is that human potentialities in themselves represent a social growth and unfold themselves only in the processes of social action and interaction. Man can function as man only in association with his kind. If there were no society, there would be no scope for love or hate, envy or emulation, revenge or gratitude<sup>1</sup>, or other feelings; there would be neither village nor city; neither political nor economic activity; there would be no chance for art or literature to develop. Man can grow, can become himself, only in society.

The third important factor in sociality is that the human mind, is extremely plastic, specially in childhood.

**Plasticity.** Human beings rapidly gather impressions from the surroundings, imitate others, and adapt themselves to diverse situations. It is this plasticity which lies at the root of educability. This is what enables the child to educate itself and to receive education from others. Later, we shall see that this plasticity has its

<sup>1</sup> Some animals show some of these qualities, but only to the extent that they lead a social life of their own.

dangers. Here it is only necessary to point out that it socializes the child from the start. Opinions and ideas crowd in upon the young and receive a ready welcome. There begins an adjustment to customs, institutions, and opportunities which continues throughout life. The child breathes the social atmosphere. Society, as a modern philosopher has said, pours itself into his being.

Literally, man lives, moves and has his being in society. Society is around him and society is within him. Philosophi-

ally, there can be no antithesis between the individual and society. Every individual is necessarily a social individual.

No antithesis between society and individual. At the same time, society consists only of individuals. It is not a super-organism. It has no super-mind of its own. It exists only in the minds of its members. If the individuals could divest themselves of all social feelings and considerations, society would automatically come to an end. It is thus patent that sociality and individuality are two aspects of the same thing. (Sociality exists, and can exist only in individuals; individuals exist, and can exist, only in society. Nor does the matter stop here. Sociality develops and grows richer *pari passu* with the development and enrichment of individual minds.) He whose personality has developed to a high degree and in a harmonious manner finds an ever-increasing scope for sympathy, co-operation and service. He will be sensitive to many phenomena which leave cruder minds untouched. He will project himself into social situations which seem to lie beyond the orbit of others. He will, in short, be able to discharge his social responsibilities and serve society better than the others. The larger the number of such persons, the higher the social development. Similarly, if society as a whole is advanced, prosperous and refined, the individual will have a better chance of high and harmonious

development than is otherwise possible. Even a genius depends on society for opportunities of education and observation, for inspiration and driving force. A high standard of public health and sanitation must be achieved before one can enjoy a reasonable assurance of immunity from disease. Society must have attained to a certain level of morality before particular individuals are likely to be generous and altruistic in disposition. Personality develops in accordance with opportunities presented by society. A rich and diversified social life offers chances of intellectual achievement, of practising and enjoying refined architecture, painting, music etc., of genuine liberty of expression, of exercising talents of organisation and statesmanship and so forth. Here the individual has a chance of rising to the full stature of his being, of achieving the happiness of a balanced and harmonious life, in short, of self-realisation. A crude society, on the other hand, cannot offer the same chances and cannot favour development to the same extent. It has been well said that the individual is a social factor and a social product at the same time. He unites in himself a multiple variety of reactions.

Such is the essence of social life and, as such, it is simple enough. But, as every one knows, human affairs bristle with

difficulties and present grave complications and problems.

Social Divisions. It is necessary to understand their genesis before one can put the topics of civics in the correct perspective. One of the root factors is that there is no single society comprising all persons on a footing of equality. Men are divided into numerous races and nations and these, in their turn, are often subdivided into branches. There are a large number of states and political divisions which are cut across by religious and sectarian cleavages. Numerous groups have their own peculiar

manners, customs and morals. There are castes and classes based on birth, wealth or occupation. Vocations are organised in different guilds and other unions. Differences of taste and aptitude, education and enlightenment combine with the other factors to produce all sorts of clubs and associations. Last but not least, there are millions and millions of families each comprising just a few individuals. Every individual belongs to some of these groups; none can belong to all of them.

Individuals offer loyalty in different measures to the groups to which they belong and extend tolerance in different measures to those to which they do not belong.

Loyalties.

There are a few whose hearts glow with love of all humanity and who endeavour to promote universal welfare. There are millions who are deeply attached to their own nation and are prepared to die for it. But they do not care for other nations and even trample on their welfare to serve their own real or supposed interests. There are others who do not care much for their nation or country but seek primarily the benefit of their own sect, class or caste. There are those, again, who are chiefly concerned with the vocational organisation to which they happen to belong. Most people give the first place in their affections and endeavours to their families and show attachment to some other groups in varying degrees.

There are scarcely any persons who can be described as utterly selfish. Man is so constituted that a purely selfish life would be unbearable. Where it does exist, it exists as a malady, chiefly, in some form of insanity. Practically,

The ordering of loyalties.

every person cares for *some* others—his family, relations, friends or other fellow-beings. He lives at least partially for them. Even robbers and murderers show some loyalty

to their gang. Ordinary people cast in their lot with their families, fraternities, circles of friends and acquaintances, and, it may be, some wider group or association. Fortunately, there is no question of creating sympathy or altruism; its germs are already present in every normal person. The problem is how to extend its range and how to harmonise the loyalties to the several groups and associations to which one belongs. One of the most expressive definitions of civics is that it consists in the right ordering of loyalties. Along with it arises the problem of the attitudes to be adopted towards groups to which one does not belong. The double problem calls not merely for sympathy but also for imagination and understanding.

There is one group to which every person belongs. That is the human race. Compared with what is common between men as men, all the differences of colour and race, nation and rank, are insignificant. The fundamental unity of mankind is a fact of nature. And now applied science has abolished distance and brought the world together as a single economic and cultural whole. What affects the agriculture or industries of one country may effect the welfare of many others. Commerce is world-wide and tariffs or bounties set up by one state exercise a serious repercussion in many others. Ideas leap over frontiers and, whatever the place of their origin, may influence the whole world. The unity of mankind is thus a matter of great practical importance. If one were to answer to-day the ancient question, "who is thy neighbour?" the only correct reply would be "the whole world." No longer can we afford to remain indifferent to what is happening in the world at large. There is a community of interest in the world. It demands a corresponding world-loyalty.

Loyalty to humanity.

It follows that patriotism or loyalty to one's own nation should not conflict with the larger interests of humanity.

No country should seek to take undue advantage of the weakness of others.  
 Loyalty to Nations. No nationalist should think of oppressing other nationalities. No state should allow pride or prestige to hinder co-operation with other states for the sake of general progress. Patriotism should be harmonised with humanitarianism. Otherwise, the welfare of all, including that of high-handed peoples, would suffer in the long run. Subject to this sovereign proviso, one is justified in feeling a warm attachment to one's country and furthering its welfare. The disinterested service to one's country, as to humanity at large, ennobles the whole being of man and brings in its train a gratification and exhilaration which nothing else can impart. It is, in fact, part of the harmonious development of personality.

The country is not an abstraction. It means the entire body of its inhabitants, above all, the peasants, labourers and petty dealers who constitute the vast majority. National activities, whether official or unofficial, should be planned and performed in terms of their welfare. At the same time, the various groups and associations should so function as not to damage the larger interests of the country and of humanity.

It is not necessary here to discuss whether there should be any divisions of class or caste at all. The point is that none who cares to belong to such a group or to a vocational group like a Labour Union, a Millowner's association, a Bar or Medical association, etc., should allow his vision to be narrowed in its horizon or his sympathies and public spirit to be circumscribed in their range. Similarly, the adherents of a sect or church are not justified in losing sight of the welfare of the wider groups to which they and others belong.

As a member of any group whatever, one should so regulate one's conduct as not to violate the interests of the country or of humanity. One should go further and always be ready to co-operate with other groups for the sake of the larger welfare.

The same principle is applicable to the family. As the sequel will show, the family is the most influential of all associations.

Loyalty to the Family. The nursing, educative and economic functions which it discharges

are of supreme importance. Its ordinary run evokes affection, service and self-sacrifice of an intensity which accrete only occasionally to other associations. Loyalty to the family is spontaneous and exceptionally strong. What is called selfishness is very often just this absorbing loyalty to one's family. It is, therefore, all the more necessary to make sure that it does not conflict with the larger social interest.

Every family should so live its life as not to trench on the welfare of others. One should pursue one's livelihood in a manner so as not to injure or impoverish others. Every adult member of every family should be ready to co-operate in the task of general improvement. The loyalty to the family should harmonise with loyalty to wider groups which culminate in humanity.

Such an ordering of loyalties is not always an easy matter. It may be difficult to perceive where the true in-

terests of humanity or a country or groups lie. The old ideas and traditions

may no longer fit the changing circumstances and it may take time for fresh traditions to grow up. Social and economic conditions have become so complex that they cannot be understood at a glance. It is, therefore, necessary to make a thorough, scientific study of all the circumstances and to

think hard on the problems of society. It is equally necessary to let the sympathies play and expand freely.

He who runs may see how great is the vogue of conflict in human relationships. There is conflict between one class and another, one sect and another, one country and another and there are in-

Conflicts. numerable minor conflicts between transient groups and combinations. History tells us that there have always been such conflicts. Every such conflict shows that on one side or the other or perhaps on both sides the loyalty to humanity and perhaps also to the country is intercepted, jeopardized or monopolised by less extensive groupings. It is pertinent to inquire whether those conflicts have arisen from natural and ineradicable causes. Supposing they were inevitable in the past, are there any modern developments affecting the causes of conflicts and rendering their removal possible? In any case, how far can conflicts be avoided so as to facilitate the right ordering of loyalties?

Human nature is a rather vague expression but in no sense of the term is it correct to hold that man has an innate craving to molest fellow-men. Conflicts between group and group can be explained on grounds other than inborn antipathy. What really happens is that man asserts himself to secure an adequate sustenance, comfort and leisure and to get round the obstacles he encounters.

Anthropology and History tell us that for thousands and thousands of years the conveniences and comforts of life could be obtained only with some difficulties. Scientific Inven- culty and hard labour. But men wanted them in abundance and with ease and security. Those who were more powerful tried to impose their will on others in order to throw a disproportionate burden of labour on them and in order to secure a higher income and greater leisure for



themselves. Thus, conflicts and wars, conquest and subjection, have been going on for centuries. Warfare has acquired an immense vogue and glory and has therefore been resorted to for all sorts of purposes. Another cause of conflict was that in their isolation communities developed an exclusive culture and pride. Whenever circumstances brought them into contact, there might arise a clash of religion, traditions and pride. There was certainly a great deal of cultural borrowing from one community by another. But enough of exclusive pride remained to foment bickerings and conflicts. Yet another cause of heart-burning and struggle was sheer ignorance and erroneous ideas about men and things, leading to suspicion, distrust and hatred. There have also been other factors of a minor character operating in the same direction but it is enough here to clarify the role of the principal factors in conflict—error, cultural exclusiveness and pride, and divergence of economic interests. Round them grew up traditions of conflict. These traditions have, sometimes in a very subtle manner, affected the customs, laws, institutions and outlook of men.

If these causes were removed, it would be possible for men to attend to the interests of associations without infringing higher loyalties, above all, the loyalty to humanity. A little reflection will show that modern scientific developments have now rendered it much easier than before to establish conditions of harmony. Scientific appliances can enormously increase the yield of agriculture, mines and factories. They can effect a great saving of human labour and guarantee leisure to all. They can increase the income of all and impart a sense of security to all. The economic causes of conflict can now be completely removed. Similarly, it is now possible, with the help of printing and the radio and

means of transport, to educate every boy and girl, every man and woman, in the world. The greater the enlightenment, the lesser will be the chances of rancour and bitterness. At the same time, education, travel and opportunities of co-operation can increase the common elements in cultures and diminish their exclusiveness and intolerance. These results have not yet been achieved. But they are possible of achievement. It is important to grasp the possibility. It indicates how the path can be cleared for the right ordering of loyalties. Economic amelioration, cultural understanding and education—these are the chief means of bringing about the conditions of truly civic life for all people.

It follows that a great moral endeavour is necessary to push on the work of improvement along these lines. Those who aspire to live the right kind of life should try carefully to understand where the true interests of humanity and country lie and how they should regulate their attachments to their families and other associations so as to harmonise all their loyalties. One should try to understand one's duties in this social background and to perform them to the best of one's capacity. To set the example of right conduct is a contribution to civic life.

### CHAPTER III

## DUTIES AND RIGHTS

MEN are not exactly equal to one another in point of capacity. There are some who possess greater powers of work

and endurance than others. Some have  
Inequalities.                      more acute brains than others. Some  
have a keener aesthetic sense than others. Differences of  
aptitude and temperament can be observed from person to  
person. It is necessary to distinguish between two sorts of  
inequalities. There are those which arise from differences  
of natural endowment. Then there are those which are due  
to inequality of opportunities—opportunities of educa-  
tion, of acquiring wealth or fame, of serving society, of  
rising to the full stature of one's capacity. The former type  
of inequality implies that we cannot have a society in which  
every one will be equal in ability, influence or position to every  
one else. But we must carefully guard against confusing  
the inequalities arising from differences of opportunity with  
those arising from differences of native capacity. Besides,  
the former are accentuated by the latter in many cases.  
Again, a great deal of talent goes unused to the grave, be-  
cause of lack of opportunity<sup>1</sup>. A man may be richly gifted

<sup>1</sup> Compare Gray's *Elegy, written in a country churchyard*:—

"Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,  
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre:

but if he fails to find scope and facilities for expressing himself, he may easily be mistaken for one devoid of mental vigour. As a matter of fact, the percentage of idiots and imbeciles in a society is small. The vast majority are capable of giving a good account of themselves.

It is, therefore, essential to provide every one with the maximum opportunity for all-round development—for developing his faculties to the utmost, for living an abundant life, for winning happiness. Society should be so organised and public opinion should so exert itself as to secure to every one conditions favourable for growth. This is important for society from two points of view. In the first place, it signifies social well-being. For society only means inter-related individuals. In the second place, the higher the development of personality the greater the chance of rendering social service. A highly educated, energetic and public spirited person can be much more useful to others than one who has no chance of receiving education, whose energies have been damped by adverse circumstances and whose public spirit has been stifled by poverty or disillusionment. A society in which opportunity is widely diffused will throw up a much larger number of thinkers, scientists, statesmen and reformers than one which restricts the chances of development to a few.

Equality of Opportunity.

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But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,  
 Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;  
 Chill penury repressed their noble rage,  
 And froze the genial current of the soul.  
 Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
 The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:  
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

From whatever standpoint we may look at the matter it is clear that the maximum opportunity should be guaranteed to every one for developing

Rights.

the best that there be in him. It should be provided to every boy and every girl, every man and every woman, in all communities and all countries. It may be laid down that every person has the right to this maximum opportunity. He has the right to those conditions of life which are calculated to furnish the maximum opportunity. Looked at from this angle, rights are not independent of society, much less of social good. They are *social* because the individual development in question can take place only in society, because it can be furthered only by society, and pre-eminently, because it is part of the social good. Rights are nothing more—and nothing less,—than those social conditions which are necessary or favourable to the development of personality. Rights are, in their essence, aspects of social life. Sometimes they are recognised by the state and public opinion and are embodied in customs and laws. There are others which stand on a different footing. But they do not cease to be rights even if they are not enforced by the courts of law or by the dominant opinion of the times.

The rights, that is to say, the right conditions of social life, are to be enjoyed by all. They are to be enjoyed in

Duties.

common. Rights cannot be a purely individual affair; they are essentially co-operative. By dint of co-operation they are brought into being; by dint of co-operation they are sustained. If the conditions of right living are to be maintained for all, every one should expect them for himself and every one should so act as not to hamper their enjoyment by others. Nay more, every one should positively encourage such conditions for all. What is a right in regard to oneself is a duty in regard to

others. Rights and duties are thus interdependent. They are two aspects of the same thing. If one looks at them from one's own standpoint, they are rights. If one looks at them from the standpoint of others, they are duties. Both are social and both are, in substance, conditions of right living to be secured to all members of society. It is futile to consider whether rights are prior to duties or *vice versa*. Both hang together. They are the counterpart of each other. If every one insisted on his rights for himself but neglected his duties towards others, there would soon be no rights left for any one.

The conditions of right living, comprised in the system of rights and duties are bound up together. It is necessary

Elementary Edu-  
cation.

to analyse them in order to bring out their practical implications. The first element is the maximum opportunity of education to all. There is a sense in which every family as well as society at large provides some sort of training to its members. Without it, social organisation would collapse. But a very systematic and thorough training is required if one is to rise to the full stature of one's being and prove of maximum use to society. Under modern conditions of society such a training has become more necessary than ever before. Unless it is forthcoming, young people can rarely make their way, successfully and usefully, in society. It follows that the foundations of such a training should be laid in universal elementary instruction. Children cannot look after their interests. Hence, this elementary instruction should be compulsory. Every boy and every girl must be put to school. No exceptions whatever should be made on the score of birth, rank, caste or parental predilection. Every young person has the right to education and all those

concerned with him, including society at large, have the duty of furnishing that education.

Elementary instruction, however, is not enough. By itself it will scarcely enable one to understand the social mechanism and to discharge one's duties.

Continued Edu- Nor will it suffice for any of the numer-  
cation. ous skilled callings and professions,

which are necessary for maintaining social life at a high level of efficiency. It is therefore part of the right to education to place full opportunities of continued education within reach of all young people. It may take any of the numerous forms of technical education or of what is called liberal education, according to one's aptitudes and inclinations. But the facilities for continued education must be open to all. Experience has proved the necessity of going still further. Important public responsibilities have now to be laid on grown-up men and women. Later we shall examine the nature of these responsibilities. Here it is enough to point out that public responsibilities can be discharged satisfactorily only by minds, active, alert and open to ideas. To foster these qualities there should be provision for adult education and for libraries and reading rooms. To sum up, the right conditions of life in the modern age imply universal elementary instruction, and ample facilities for secondary, technical and higher education, as well as those for adult education and free use of public libraries etc. Education is the foremost right, and its promotion is the foremost duty, of all members of society.

So far, one of the greatest obstacles to the spread of education has been poverty. In the interest of education, then, it is necessary to abolish poverty. That, indeed, is necessary also for other reasons. Poverty usually stunts the

Economic Mini-  
mum.

growth of personality. It diminishes the chances of happiness. It allows the lives of the poor people to be controlled by the rich. It usually prevents a poor man from contributing his full quota to social thought and energy. There are, no doubt, exceptional individuals who rise above their adverse circumstances. But it remains true that the vast majority of the poor people are constrained to lead truncated lives. All this runs counter to the right conditions of social life. From the standpoint of general social good, every person, who works or is at least willing to work, has the right to a decent economic standard of life. He has the right to adequate and wholesome food, adequate clothing, comfortable housing and to something additional for sundries. He has the right to leisure in order to cultivate his mind, to look after his children and to participate in the wider social and political activities. This may be called the economic minimum. A person should be at liberty to acquire more by dint of ability and exertion. But the economic minimum should be guaranteed to him by society, that is, by the State. In concrete terms it means that the earnings of all peasants, the wages of all labourers and the salaries of all employees should be high enough to cover the expenses of decent food, clothing, shelter, education, travel, re-creation etc. If their remuneration, in other words, their purchasing power, attains to this standard, the incomes of tradesmen, physicians, lawyers, journalists, writers etc. who supply their various requirements, will automatically reach the same level, probably, higher levels. Next, those who are willing to work but cannot find work for reasons beyond their control, would be entitled to doles from the state. *Lastly*, those who, like old people and invalids, are simply incapable of work should, in case of necessity, be supported by the state.

It has been hinted above that the right to the economic



minimum carries with it the duty of work. If people did not work, there would be no wealth to fulfil

The Duty of even the barest requirements of life.  
Work.

Every able-bodied man must do some socially useful work, in agriculture, industry, commerce or other vocations. None should be content to live on inheritance from ancestors, or charity from relations or friends. To be idle is to evade social responsibility and to frustrate one's personality. Work is the surest antidote to unhappiness and worry. It is the primary channel of social service. It follows that society should attach no stigma to any kind of honest work. All work must be honoured, as well as those who perform it. Only when one fails to find any work or is altogether incapacitated for work, is one justified in looking for support to society. If economic pursuits be carefully planned and organised, they would, specially with the aid of scientific appliances, yield enough to maintain the whole community in comfort and leave a margin for the promotion of public education, sanitation etc. In the case of women, the bearing and rearing of children is a vocation in itself and a fair substitute for other work. Single women, however, should work and all women should have the option of manual or intellectual work, according to their leisure and aptitudes.

It will be a mistake to suppose that the rights to education and the economic minimum are purely ideal. In truth, they can be translated into fact. A

Practicability of the rights. marked approach to their practical

realisation has already been made in Great Britain, France, Denmark, Switzerland, Norway, Sweden and other countries. Elementary instruction is there not only compulsory but also free for all boys and all girls. There are arrangements for higher and technical education,

adult education, libraries, museums etc. On the economic side, a high standard has been attained in these countries, as also in the United States, Canada and elsewhere. In several countries the minimum wage has been fixed for labourers. The law prohibits that any labourer be paid less than the minimum. The maximum hours of work have also been fixed. No one can be made to work longer. The state awards pensions to all needy aged people and grants allowances to those who, from no fault of their own, fail to find employment. There are also in operation systems of insurance against unemployment and sickness. Social thinkers and reformers hold that a good deal still remains to be accomplished in these countries. But already it has been amply demonstrated that the mass of the people in a state can be raised to a high level of education and economic comfort. What has been done and is being done in some countries can be done, by well-planned effort, in all other countries. There is nothing fantastic or visionary in the idea of the whole of humanity being educated and provided with the conveniences and comforts of life. It is a severely practical ideal. It is the expression of the indispensable conditions of social good—of the elementary rights to education and the economic minimum. They must be fully recognised and respected by society. They must be enforced by law, so far as they are capable of legal enforcement. They are so important that they may be called Fundamental Rights.

It has been pointed out above that every person should be free to acquire more than the compulsory education and

Civil Rights.                      to earn more than the economic minimum. He should also be free to express

his individuality in other ways, so far as it is consistent with similar expression on the part of all others. The right to self-expression carries with it the duty of respecting the same

in others. But for the latter, the former would disappear in a welter of confusion and anarchy. Opportunity to all alike—that is the principle of Civil Rights. Strictly speaking, Civil Rights include the rights to education and the economic minimum which have been discussed above. But the term is generally used to cover some specific opportunities and guarantees thereof. (A civil right is pre-eminently one which its possessor can enforce, or at least ought to be able to enforce, by the help of social agencies, against all who seek to violate it. As such there is a large number of Civil Rights—rights capable of enforcement by public opinion or by the courts of law.) Here it is necessary to notice only the most important of them.

One of the central facts about man is the vocation he follows. It largely determines the general tenor of his life, his circle of friends and the nature of his contribution to social welfare.

The Right to follow a Vocation.

Few things are more conducive to happiness than to find a vocation for which one is fitted by temperament and inclination. It is, so to say, to find oneself. It is a means of rendering to society the best service of which one is capable. Every man should, therefore, have the right to choose his vocation and to occupy such position as he may find. Accident of birth should not close any avenues of employment to him. He should not be compelled to follow a particular vocation merely because he happens to be born in a particular class. Neither custom nor law should ban any career to any man. It may be that a man fails to find a suitable opening to a cherished profession because better qualified candidates are available. He should then be able to choose the vocation which appeals next to him and which has a place for him. The point is that, in this matter custom, law or opinion should impose no restriction and no compulsion on

the score of birth, of colour, creed or class. Society cannot guarantee to any one that he shall be absorbed by the profession of his first preference. But it can and should guarantee to every one that no artificial barriers shall block his path. As a corollary to this principle, every one should have an equal opportunity of receiving the intellectual grounding which assists the right choice of vocation, and the training which qualifies for it.

There is another right closely connected with the right to choose a vocation. It is the right to freedom of movement. Every one should be free to travel, to reside and to work anywhere he likes, at least in his own country. No passports or letters of security should be required for that purpose. Freedom of movement is calculated to widen the field for choosing a career.

The Right to Free Movement.

Every one should be able to enjoy, in peace and security, the guaranteed economic minimum and, subject to the social interest, any additional income from his work. This is the right to property.

The Right to Property.

It does not exclude social control of property. In all ages and in all lands society has exercised some control over the tenure and the use of property. The subject is too vast to be treated here at length but it may be pointed out that there is a social interest involved in all production and distribution. Society is justified in guarding that interest, again on the principle of equal opportunity to all. Society, specially through the association called the state, makes laws to regulate inheritance, land-tenure, mining etc., controls currency, exchange and usury, runs or at least controls railways, post and telegraph etc., and levies various taxes. Natural resources and large-scale enterprise are put to the best use not by unregulated private effort but through

co-operative control, designed in the interests of the whole society. None can be allowed to throw large sources of wealth out of use. Next, there are enterprises like canals, railways etc., which have to be conducted on such a large scale that the state must either take them over or co-ordinate and control them. It needs scarcely be pointed out that taxes have to be levied to defray the expenses of various social services. All this amounts to a large measure of social control of the property system. No hard and fast rules can be laid down to determine the limits and character of this social control. It must depend on the totality of circumstances at a given time in a given country or in the world at large. The governing principle is that this social control be designed in the interests of the whole of society and should not be over-weighted on the side of any particular section. Subject to this control, every one should freely enjoy the use of his wealth. None should molest him; none should obstruct his path.

So emerges the right to security. It means that social conditions be such that none should injure or rob others.

The Right to Security. Law and order should be maintained in the interests of the whole community.

As a counterpart, it is the duty of the individual to refrain from harming others and to co-operate in maintaining the conditions of security.

The soundest foundation of security is justice. The public order should be grounded in justice to all. None

The Right to Justice. should be placed under any special disabilities. None should be awarded

preferential treatment, irrespective of merit. Based on justice, order inspires confidence and loyalty. Another implication of justice is that every one should be equal in the eye of law and receive impartial treatment in any court of law. The law should not discri-

minate against any person or class as such. Nor should its day-to-day administration be such as to deflect the course of justice. If the cases take an inordinately long time to decide or if the expenses of law-courts are very heavy, the poor man is placed at a disadvantage against the rich. The latter can wait and spend, the former cannot. Justice, then, has to be not only impartial but also cheap and expeditious. This is the right to justice. It imposes a corresponding duty on all—the duty of strengthening the elements of justice in the social order and of assisting the cause of just adjudication, for instance, by serving as assessors or jurors.

Speaking philosophically, the concept of justice is applicable to every sphere of associated life. It is not necessary

here to dilate on all the implications of social justice. It will suffice to refer to a few of them which pertain to the most cherished and intimate of social relations and which have a close bearing on the question of Rights and Duties. The role of the family will be discussed in a later chapter.<sup>1</sup> Here it is enough to refer to family rights. There is nothing absolute about them any more than there is about other rights. They are all grounded in social good—which consists in affording full opportunity for development to all and in harmonising the development of all. Family rights do not lie altogether beyond the purview of general social regulation. For instance, society prescribes under what circumstances, if any, should a husband or wife be permitted to divorce or separate from the other party. It determines how the children are to be cared for in such a contingency. Again, the law may prescribe that every parent must have the children properly educated and vaccinated. It must intervene to protect any

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<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, Ch. VI.

member of the family from gross ill-treatment by others. It may be repeated that the social control should proceed on the principle of equal opportunity to all for self-realisation. Subject to such social control, every one should be free to enjoy his domestic life. This is the right to the family. None should disturb the felicity of the family life of any one else. If he does so, he should be suitably dealt with under the law.

Another important civil right is that to freedom of religion. Belief, of course, cannot be controlled by any external agency. It pertains to the inner life of the mind which, by its very nature, lies beyond the reach of regulation.

The Right to Freedom of Religion.

The right to freedom of religion indicates the right to pray and worship according to one's own convictions. Subject to certain considerations which will presently be examined, every one should be free to profess whatever religion he likes and to perform what ceremonies he likes. Likewise, he should be free to profess no religion at all. The right to religious freedom negates coercion in these matters. It implies that no civil or political disabilities or preferences should attach to adherence to any creed or to membership of any church. Accordingly, the state and its laws are to maintain an attitude of strict impartiality towards all persuasions. It follows that religious persecution is never to be thought of. But at the same time, none can be permitted to indulge in manifestly unsocial conduct in the guise of religious dispensation. For instance, the state cannot allow human sacrifices, the killing of infants, the burning of widows, or the social and economic degradation of any class of human beings, though these be upheld by some on the ground of religious sanction. Similarly, the state is justified in prohibiting practices like child-marriage and compulsory widowhood.

This is in accordance with the principle of civic life which has already been stated, viz., equality of opportunity for development to all. It will be observed that practices like those mentioned above deny opportunity of self-realisation to some persons and that they pertain to social relations rather than to religion in the strict sense of the term. Apart from them, every one is entitled to complete liberty of religious belief, prayer, worship and ceremonial.

The right to religious freedom implies the duty of religious toleration. None should molest others on account of differences of religion. Nor should these be allowed to affect social relations and political attitudes. The profession of any religion, or of no religion, should not be a bar to co-operation in the general life of the neighbourhood and of wider areas.

The same considerations apply to other aspects of cultural freedom. Every one is entitled to use his own language, to delight in his own literature, to stick to his own cultural values. He may, of his own accord, adopt another language, love another literature and transfer his loyalty to another scheme of values. That is his lookout. The important thing is that he should neither be subjected to any persecution, coercion, or disabilities, nor shown any partiality, on account of his particular brand of culture. Once again, the right to cultural freedom implies the duty of cultural toleration. To look askance at others because they use a particular language or dialect, hold different views on society or dress and eat differently is to infringe the maxim of toleration. It is only in an atmosphere of tolerance that religious and cultural freedom can flourish. At first sight many are

The Duty of Toleration.

Cultural Freedom and Toleration.



shocked at the unfamiliar. Every one should be on his guard against the tendency to intolerance and should exercise his imagination to understand diversities. To understand all is to forgive all, says a proverb.

Religious and cultural freedom is obviously akin to general liberty of thought and expression. That liberty is, indeed, indispensable to the development of mind and ideas, and therefore, to the proper type of social life. It has been hinted above that thought by its very nature defies compulsion. But liberty of thought is really incomplete and practically useless without liberty of expression. As a social being, man is encouraged to think freely, to glory in thinking, only when he can express his thoughts to others. Thoughts which are denied expression weigh heavily on the mind and create discomfort. Besides, expression alone can secure discussion of ideas. Free discussion brings home the truth of true ideas; it vivifies the truth, and extends its vogue. Free discussion leads to the detection of error and falsehood, paves the way for the discovery of truth, stimulates the mind and enriches personality. Freedom of expression thus ranks among the indispensable conditions of development and social good. The right to freedom of expression, however, carries some obligations with it. Every one is to concede to others the freedom which he claims for himself. None is to abuse this freedom to slander others without cause. If he does, he must be subjected to legal penalties. Nor should one preach the violation by force of the rights of others. It is of course permissible to hold and express different opinions on social affairs but they should be so expressed as not to incite others to ride roughshod over the social interest.

From the freedom of expression it is but a short step to

The Right to  
Liberty of Thought  
and Expression.

freedom of Association and Public Meeting. People are entitled to band themselves together in

The Rights to Association and Public Meeting.

Associations for advocating a cause or a programme, or for satisfying their cravings for literature, art, music etc., or for recreation together. They are entitled to form churches, academies etc., and to establish labour unions, peasants' unions, landholders' and millowners' associations, co-operative societies, bar associations, medical councils, teachers' federations, journalists' institutes etc., etc. Similarly, they may band themselves together in social reform leagues, political clubs and societies, party associations etc., etc.<sup>1</sup> On the same principle they are entitled to hold public meetings to expound their views, to enlist public support for them, and to represent matters to local or higher state authorities.

The obligations attending on the rights to association and public meeting are obvious. Associations and meetings should adopt a tolerant attitude towards

The Corresponding Obligations.

others. They must refrain from slandering others on pain of legal penalties. In the heat of the moment, they must not trample over the deeper social interest. Here the problem is more difficult than in the case of individuals. Associations can acquire great power through numbers and organisation and clash with one another or aim at dominance in a manner imperilling the general interest. Or the majority in an association may tyrannise over minorities. Or the association as a whole may contravene the principle of adequate individual liberty. As a general rule, so long as they confine themselves to peaceful persuasion, they should not be interfered with. Beyond it, the state as the representative of the public interest, may

<sup>1</sup> On Associations, see also *infra*, Ch. VII.

intervene to co-ordinate the activities of associations. For instance, if a clash between a powerful Trade Union and an Employers' Union threatens to dislocate the economic life of the community, it is the right and duty of the state to attempt mediation, and in the last resort, to impose a settlement. A church which usurps the functions of the state has similarly to be restrained. On the principle of safeguarding equality of opportunity to all, the state is entitled to co-ordinate the spheres and harmonise the activities of associations.<sup>1</sup>

Such are the principal civil rights. There are also some others, for instance, the right to secrecy of postal and telegraphic matter. They all spring from

Other Civil Rights. the desirability of establishing and maintaining social conditions favourable to good life for all. They are essentially of general application. If they are confined to a mere minority or a mere majority, as distinct from the whole of society, they cease to be rights and become privileges.

Civil Rights find their complement in Political Rights. The latter may broadly be defined as conditions under which

Rights, Civil and adult persons share in the task of government or exercise influence on government. Between them and civil rights, no rigid demarcation is possible. They spring from the same considerations of general social good, specially of equality of opportunity. They buttress each other; civil rights are insecure without political rights, and political rights lose their vital significance without civil rights. There are rights which are both civil and political. For instance, the rights to freedom of expression, association and public meeting are civil as well as political.

<sup>1</sup> On the role of the state, see *infra*, Ch. VIII.

The principle underlying Political Rights is that no one can fulfil himself without an opportunity of sharing in the wider life of the community and exercising his pull on affairs. To confine a man to his family, church and economic pursuits is to dwarf his stature. It is to stunt his development and to contract his whole life. Society is the loser if it does not avail itself of all the ability and public spirit in the community. Nay, it is the loser if it does not establish conditions which evoke ability and public spirit in all quarters. Nor should it be forgotten that social life becomes truly social only in proportion as its benefits, risks and responsibilities are shared by all. Political rights are the avenues to social co-operation on the largest scale.

The primary political right is the right to vote in elections to municipal and district boards, provincial or central legislatures and similar public bodies. In small areas like the village, all the adults can gather together and transact some common affairs. Here the suffrage takes the form of direct participation in the primary assemblies. In either case, it calls for judgment and cannot be granted to minors, idiots and lunatics. Nor can confirmed criminals be allowed to retain it; nor, again, those who have been proved guilty of electoral malpractices. But every normal adult person,—man or woman—is, *prima facie*, entitled to the franchise. He has to be a member of that very comprehensive association called the state. He is entitled to a voice in the management of its affairs. He should have an opportunity of serving it through his judgment. The right to vote, then, is bound up with the duty of forming as correct a judgment as possible and, therefore, with the education which, more than anything else, enables one to form that judgment. The right to vote and the

right to education go together. A difficult situation arises when the suffrage has to be extended to uneducated persons. A vicious circle may be formed if the suffrage is denied because of lack of education and education is denied because the mass of the people have not got the political influence to obtain adequate facilities for it. It is impossible to dogmatise on the subject but statesmanship should always consider the advisability of simultaneously extending the franchise and pushing mass education. In any case, it must be remembered that the suffrage is the *sine qua non* of good life and everything possible should be done to extend it to all adults.

The right to the vote finds its complement in the right to get elected to local boards, legislatures etc. The disqualifications in regard to the suffrage apply with greater force to this second right. The Right to Election. The responsibilities attaching to it are much heavier. Education may therefore be regarded as a necessary qualification of the right to election.

The third political right is that to office. It does not, of course, mean that anybody may assume any office. What it means is that all are equally eligible for appointment to offices for which they are qualified by virtue of education, judgment, training, experience and integrity. As a corollary, all are entitled to facilities for acquiring education and experience of affairs. The implication is that birth, class, religion etc. should be neither a bar to office nor a qualification for it. Merit should be the sole criterion. By this means society will obtain the best available service. Individuals will have a chance of fulfilling themselves by responsible participation in managing common affairs. Per-

sonality and society suffer if offices, high or low, are hereditary or monopolised by any particular sections.

It will be observed that neither civil nor political rights flow with logical simplicity from *a priori* principles. They

are not theorems of geometry with enunciations, constructions, proof and Q. E. D. all complete. They deal with

Political Obligations.

human minds and affairs which are dynamic and which are capable of infinite shapes and channels of expression. Social rights dovetail into one another and are bound up with social obligations. They are all aspects of conditions which must be considered together and which are liable to change. Nowhere are obligations more serious than in regard to political rights. Government is a difficult art and wrong moves may have grave consequences. It is, therefore, the duty of every person seriously to interest himself in common affairs—in political questions—and try to form an unbiassed opinion. It is his duty to shake off all prejudice and partisanship, to try to obtain correct information and to mind the good of all. He is to treat the suffrage as a sacred trust and decline to be moved by any considerations, private or sectional, except the public good, in casting the vote. If elected, he is morally bound, along with others, assiduously to think out measures of public good and do his level best for their execution. Those placed in office should, so to say, live for the public, directing all their thoughts and actions to the social good. Political obligations are not merely of an intellectual character. They are also obligations of honesty and of what is called public spirit or social service. The great thing is to steer clear of considerations of family, class, caste or sect and aim directly at the good of all.

From the practical recognition of these rights emerges

the type of social organisation and government which is called Democratic. It rests on the Demos, Democracy. which means the people in Greek. It builds mainly on the average member of society and has, therefore, to be grounded in universal education and universal economic welfare. If democracy gives much, it also expects much. It demands instructed judgment, moral uprightness, readiness to fall in with the general interest, toleration of differences and willingness to serve. Only thus can it develop an all-round and harmonious community-life and enable every one to realise his worth.

## CHAPTER IV

### CITIZENSHIP

AMONG the ancient Romans, rights were held to constitute Citizenship. As the Roman dominion expanded, there arose various grades of citizenship. They ranged from the enjoyment of a few civil rights to a combination of all civil and all political rights. Citizenship was the term in vogue because Rome, like Athens and other Greek habitations, was at first really a city-state.<sup>1</sup> Later, the character of the Roman state underwent a profound change but the philosophy and phrases of the city-state survived for long.

Both in theory and practice at first, and in theory alone in later times, rights pertained only to citizens. The term citizenship was, in fact, dissociated from mere residence in the city. It came to be associated pre-eminently with rights. Those who lived in the city but had no rights were not called citizens. Thus, slaves were not citizens, though they lived for generations in the city. On the other hand, those who did not actually live in the city but were supposed to be members of the city and had rights were called Citizens.

The association of Rights with Citizenship has lasted down to the present day. Either recalls the other. But like the words Politics and Civics<sup>2</sup>, Citizenship has also changed its meaning. The change is really an extension of meaning to cover modern political conditions and ideals. The small city-state has made room for the big country-state. We no

The modern meaning of Citizenship.

<sup>1</sup> See Warde Fowler, *The city-state of the Greeks and the Romans*.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*. Ch. I, p. 6.



longer admit the validity of slavery. Nor do we uphold the exclusion of women from political life. Citizenship, so far as it denotes rights, pertains to all adults in the community. In certain respects, indeed, we can go further and argue that children have also some rights, for instance, those to education and healthy up-bringing.

It is desirable to clarify these implications of modern citizenship. Firstly, rights and duties pertain as much to villagers as to town-dwellers. This is only

Villagers and  
Town-dwellers.

another way of saying that conditions favourable to self-realization should be established in all villages as in all towns. In terms of these conditions or rights, villagers are Citizens quite as much as town-dwellers. It is true that towns are centres of political life, wealth and culture. But this does not mean that the welfare of villagers is to be subordinated to that of town-dwellers. Both are entitled to equal consideration. Education and the economic minimum should be guaranteed to all alike. Similarly, all alike should be expected to work. The rights to vocation, property, security, justice, family-life, religious and cultural freedom, association and public meeting, together with the corresponding obligations pertain to villagers as to town-dwellers. Nor is an exception to be made in regard to the rights to the vote, to election and office and the necessary qualifications and obligations thereof.

In practice, this objective can be achieved only by removing the obstacles which the villager meets in the path to a full life. His environment is such that he tends to live a very parochial and circumscribed life.

The problem of  
village re-organisa-  
tion.

There was a time when the village was somewhat self-sufficient and developed a characteristic type of community life. But the modern facilities of commu-

nication have broken down the self-sufficiency and seriously affected the community life. The old traditions have gone or are fast going. So emerges the problem of re-organising the life of the village. A return to old conditions is impossible because the circumstances have altered. The railway has penetrated into remote corners, increased travel and, through imports and exports, undermined the old economy, beyond hope of recall. The print has made its way into the village and created a ferment. The process cannot now be arrested. Even if it were possible, it would not be desirable, to arrest it. It contains the promise of a fuller and richer life. It is not, then, on the basis of the comparative isolation of old that village life is to be re-organised. Nor can things be allowed to drift long without thought and guidance. The villager has lost some of the advantages of the old economy without gaining all the advantages of the new economy. The process of disintegration without a corresponding process of re-construction entails discord and damages the moral fibre. The village is thus faced with a situation in which it is not possible to go back and in which it is not desirable to stagnate. The alternative is to draw the village into the full orbit of the wider life and to place the benefits of science within its reach. It is necessary to develop the civic life in the deeper sense of the term in the village and to bring to it the advantages which are associated with city-life. To put it shortly, the villager should possess, not merely in theory but also in practice, an equal opportunity of development.

It is, first of all, necessary to develop the means of communication. An extension of the railway, supplemented by a network of metalled roads and bridges, motor-buses and motor-boats in the rural areas is among the prime needs of coun-

<sup>1</sup>The means of communication.

tries like India. The radio which can now be installed very cheaply has untold possibilities for the village. In his own cottage the villager may listen to news, speeches, and music from all over the country, yea, from half the world. *Secondly*, it is imperative to improve the yield of agriculture

Agricultural improvement.

through irrigation facilities, better manuring, better seed, and more scientific implements. For instance, the tractors,

etc. which are in use in the United States, Japan, Belgium, Canada and elsewhere, enormously increase the yield and also effect a great economy of labour. *Thirdly*, electric power

Power.

can now be conveyed very cheaply to the countryside and can be used for irrigation from wells, and for various manufactures. It is thus possible to combine the benefits of the cottage industry with those of cheap and large-scale production. *Fourthly*, the

Protection.

peasant must enjoy effective security and protection of the law and be able to stand

up to the world. *Fifthly*, he must be able to enjoy the economic minimum, and full opportunities of education.

A well-planned and well-organised effort can bring about these reforms in a comparatively short span of time.

Civic Life in the village.

Otherwise, they might take ages and a great deal of avoidable waste and suffering might occur in the meanwhile. As

village-life is re-organised, it will be possible for villagers to exercise the civil and political rights and discharge the corresponding obligations not merely in theory but also effectively in practice and with benefit to all concerned. We shall see later that it is desirable to confer some powers of self-government on every village or every union of neighbouring villages. It may pave the way to a large measure of co-operation in agriculture, in credit, in marketing and

in culture. It will thus be possible to develop a full-fledged civic life in the villages. Village life will cease to be monotonous and be freed from the gaunt spectre of poverty. It will present a variety of interests and be occupied, more than ever before, with the things of the mind.

Thus, the first extension of the meaning of citizenship pertains to the villagers. The second extension relates to

Men and Women. women. A glance at the entire range of human history from primitive savagery to modern civilization reveals many vicissitudes in the position of woman in society. It is not necessary here to describe them all, nor to inquire into their causes. Suffice it to say that when self-government developed in ancient Greece and Rome, women had no share in it. It was generally supposed, though the great philosopher Plato declined to admit, that women should confine themselves to household work and not meddle in politics. Citizenship, accordingly, rested with men and left out women. All this began to change in the nineteenth century. It has since been realised that it is a mistake to treat sex as a factor of all-pervading capital significance. There must be some difference in the functions of men and women in social life but the fact remains that women have minds as keen and as capable of improvement, as those of men. Women have as great, if not greater, capacity for social service as men. They can judge and plan and organise equally well. Above all, they have personality which, like that of men, demands ample opportunity of development. Otherwise, it is truncated and frustrated, causing pain and unhappiness or keeping life at a rudimentary plane. It need scarcely be pointed out that to consign mothers, wives and sisters to ignorance and helplessness is to debase the quality of all social life. It is degrading not merely to women but also to men. It is to with-

hold half the available resources of knowledge, judgment, and public spirit from social life in its higher reaches. Accordingly, the modern doctrine is that women should be placed on a footing of equality with men. They are to enjoy the same opportunities of education. They are entitled to adopt various professions—teaching, law, medicine, etc. Similarly, they are to enjoy the rights to the suffrage, and to election on the same terms as men. There are, indeed, some services like the army which women cannot enter. But beyond them their eligibility to office has to be freely admitted. It is not, indeed, necessary that every woman should enter a profession. As pointed out above, motherhood as well as household work is in itself a vocation<sup>1</sup>. It is, however, noteworthy that scientific appliances can be used to organise household work and at the same time to diminish its irksomeness and pressure on time. Stoves, sewing machines and washing machines are obvious instances. It is now possible for a housewife to command sufficient leisure for an active interest in the wider life around her. The principle is that women should have an equal opportunity with men for participating in social and political activities. It will rest with them to decide how far they are to avail themselves of the opportunity. It is not necessary here to go into all the detailed implications of the recognition of the equality of rights between men and women. Suffice it to point out that civic life in the modern sense of the term is impossible without women enjoying all the opportunities of growth and service which may fall to the lot of men.

A third extension of the modern meaning of citizenship relates to the status of various groups in society. Many

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<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, Ch. III, p. 28.

ancient societies were built on the basis of slavery.

Some others were built on serfdom or the subjection, in some other form, of class to class. How this slavery and subjection came into being we need not here pause to inquire. But it is clear that they denied the personality of large numbers of men and women and frustrated their chances of self-realization. Social philosophy no longer admits the moral validity of slavery or subjection. A full civic life implies that civil and political rights be enjoyed by all people without distinction of status or class. As a matter of fact, it has now become feasible to relegate an enormous amount of labour to machines so that all may live in real freedom with a judicious mixture of work and leisure. Slavery, serfdom, subjection—all these are neither needful nor desirable.

A certain margin of leisure to all is indispensable to truly civic life specially in the case of manual workers. Unduly long hours of work rob the work itself of pleasure, narrow the interests of life, and leave little time for mental development and effective participation in political life. Accordingly, many states have legislated, and have also signed international conventions, to the effect that the maximum hours of work in factories shall not exceed forty-eight per week. People should have leisure and at the same time be educated into the creative use of leisure. Leisure is worse than wasted if it is consumed by drink or dice, frivolity or sensuality. It is meant to serve the purpose of recreation, of cultivation of the intellectual and artistic tastes, and last but not least, of sharing in creative citizenship. However, the fact remains that in the absence of leisure, political rights may remain paper rights with very imperfect application to practical life.

It will thus be perceived that true civic life is universal in range. It pertains to the peoples of all countries in the world and to all sections of a people. It excludes neither women nor manual workers. It is built on the principle of equal opportunity to all.

Universality  
of Civic Life.

## CHAPTER V

### EDUCATION

No discussion on Rights, Duties or Citizenship can proceed far without touching on Education. It is, so to say, the keystone of the arch of good civic life.

Civic Life and Education. Historical experience has also demonstrated that the tone of life,—personality, happiness, mutual helpfulness, social service—is affected as much by education as by the economic factor. Education is the great instrument of socializing the individual. It is desirable to analyse the role of education and to see how it should be organised to yield maximum results. Unfortunately, the nature and function of education have often been misunderstood and a great deal of harm has been caused to society. Education has now become a science in itself. To discover how it is to be applied to the tenor of life is one of the momentous obligations of social philosophy and statesmanship.

It has already been hinted that the plasticity of the mind constitutes the foundation of educability. It is greatest in childhood<sup>1</sup> but it never disappears altogether. The child readily imbibes habits and opinions. The adult mind also grows

The basis of Education.

and continues to adapt itself to the varying circumstances of life. This adaptability differs in strength from man to man but it is rarely absent from anyone. Plasticity and

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<sup>1</sup> *Supra*. Ch. II, p. 12.



adaptability are akin to each other and enable personality to develop and to meet the ceaseless demands on it. This is education in the widest sense of the term. It begins with the mother's milk and ends only with life.

There are two dangers lurking in this process of education. It is possible to take undue advantage of the plasticity of the mind, specially in childhood. The

Risk of dogmatism.

condition of healthy growth is liberty.

It is a denial of liberty and a denial of development if all sorts of dogmas are foisted on the young mind. It is to run counter to one of the basic maxims of education, viz., that the personality of the young should be respected. The younger generation should be allowed to think and reason for itself. Its growth is stunted if it is forced to adopt wholesale and uncritically the ideas, habits and traditions of the elders. It does not follow that the past should be completely thrown to the winds. The vital point is that the young should be allowed to grow into it and, if need be, to grow out of it in various directions. A society which does not understand this psychology of education may be tempted to convert its schools and colleges into stereotyping machines. But in the absence of schools and colleges the risk is much greater. The great need is the liberation of the mind, so that it may think and plan for itself, of course, in social concert but without extinguishing the vital spark.

There is also another risk to which education in the widest sense of the term is exposed. It may be so haphazard

Risk of Inadequate training.

as to lose a great deal of its utility. It may lack the necessary foundation in the development and training of various

faculties. If it is not grounded in literacy, it fails to open the door to intellectual treasures. Again, the opportunities

of general social education may vary so enormously as to be insignificant for many people.

All these risks are doubly serious today when social organisation has become very complex and problems have grown in number and magnitude. The

Need of systematising education.

risks can be counteracted only by a concerted effort to systematise education. It must be admitted that the entire process of education (in the wider sense) cannot be systematised. There is a certain necessary type of education which the vicissitudes of life alone can impart and which lies beyond the purview of any department of public instruction. Subject to this proviso, however, a good deal can be done to offset the imperfections of general education and to maximise its benefits. Apart from the necessities of technical training, this is the basic reason for establishing schools, colleges, and universities.

One of the prime objects of a system of public instruction is to lay secure and solid foundations of general social education. Absolutely the first item

Educational foundations.

here is literary, or rather instruction in the three R's. reading, writing and arithmetic. Whatever might have been the situation in earlier ages, literacy is now indispensable to any social life of an adequate character. Under modern conditions, universal literacy is a bare necessity. The second item in public instruction is to train the faculties into right observation, experimentation, thinking and judgment. At the same time the mind has to be liberated to play freely on the world of nature and of man. Instruction fails at least partly in its purpose if it does not develop the Socratic temper—the temper which inquires, and drives to precision and definition.

The school also serves to socialise the child in ways which are scarcely possible elsewhere. The family is certainly the greatest agency in educating the child into social life. But it is necessarily narrow and informal. The school brings the child face to face with the rules of discipline. It teaches how to play and work together and how to adjust oneself to different temperaments. Life at school often rounds off angularities and idiosyncracies. It is from this social experience and co-operation that social discipline and freedom spring. It trains the young into attitudes of doing and liking what is right. This aspect of the matter has been put very well by John Ruskin in 'the Crown of Wild Olive.' "The entire object of true education" he writes, "is to make people not merely *do* the right things, but *enjoy* the right things: not merely industrious, but to love industry—not merely learned, but to love knowledge—not merely pure, but to love purity—not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice." Schools and colleges can develop an intense co-operative life through societies for Debate, Mutual help, Social service, Co-operative purchase etc., and become happy communities cherishing high ideals of thought and conduct. They enlarge the experience and form the tastes of their alumni and help them to lay the foundation of a philosophy of life. They can thus form the starting-point of a happy and well-organised social life. The friendships and enthusiasms of school days sometimes set the tone for a career of public usefulness.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jane Addams: "As our boarding-school days neared the end, in the consciousness of approaching separation, we vowed eternal allegiance to our 'early ideals,' and promised each other we would 'never abandon them without conscious justification,' and we often warned each other of 'the perils of self-tradition.'" *Twenty Years at Hull House* quoted in Graham Wallas, *the Great Society*, p. 195.

Next, a system of instruction aims at the diffusion and advancement of knowledge. Both schools and universities

Knowledge. diffuse knowledge of the sciences, philosophies and arts. The universities and

various learned societies also strive to extend the bounds of knowledge by means of research—careful observation, experiment, study and thought. They impart an intellectual and refine tone to society, widen the range of interests and raise life to a higher plane.

Lastly, a system of public instruction comprises arrangements for vocational training of various descriptions

Vocational training. —for agriculture, industry, engineering, commerce, banking, law, medicine, teaching, journalism etc., etc. The

institutions for vocational training naturally serve the purpose of diffusing knowledge and can also be used for the advancement of knowledge.

In order to yield the best results, the system of public instruction must rest on a very wide basis. From the strictly

Universal Instruction. educational point of view, as from the other standpoints which have already

been adverted to, instruction up to the age of fifteen or sixteen should be compulsory for all boys and girls. *Secondly*, vocational training should be open to all who desire to avail themselves of it. *Thirdly*, adequate facilities have to be provided for a large number of young men and women to pass through a course in the University. *Fourthly*, adult education has to be organised on a large scale for conserving the results of early instruction and for continuing the process. A yet bigger drive in adult education is required in communities which so far have had no broad basis of juvenile education. *Lastly*, libraries, learned

societies, museums, picture-galleries etc., are essential to round off the whole system.

Universal education is the biggest and most important social enterprise. It calls for a concerted effort on a gigantic

scale. Countries which have hitherto lagged behind in education should specially organise an intensive campaign of education and quickly make up the leeway. The State has to stand forth clearly and avowedly as an educational state. Education should form the first charge on its funds and on the thought and energies of those entrusted with the tasks of government. Public opinion has clearly to understand this and to insist on the government running an efficient system of free and compulsory instruction, and making the fullest provision for higher, technical and adult education. Municipal and district boards, taluka boards, village *panchayats*, etc., should, in concert with central or provincial governments, follow the same principle. Private individuals should also do their level best, bearing in mind that no charity goes such a long way to relieve distress as that devoted to the cause of education. There is another duty which the public owes to in the matter and which requires an appreciation of the true ends of education. No sect or denomination should insist of foisting their own beliefs and dogmas on educational institutions. The liberation of the mind is an object too precious to be sacrificed to any sectional considerations. In the universities thought and research progress best when they are free from dictation from any quarter.

Educational Co-operation.

If education is properly organised and diffused through society, it will improve the quality of life enormously. It will be more effective than anything else, in bringing about the equality of opportunity which is of the essence of

Hopes from Education.

civic life. It will almost automatically solve some problems which, in a state of ignorance, baffle the efforts of reformers. It will throw up a large number of scientists, thinkers, organisers, statesmen and philanthropists, both men and women, who carry civilization forward.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FAMILY

SOCIAL life expresses itself through a large number of institutions. An institution may be defined as a recognised

usage or practice, forming part of the  
Features of the established apparatus of social life.<sup>1</sup>  
Family.

Many of the institutions find concrete expression through associations. The latter thus rank among the great vehicles of social life. Associations may be so small as to consist of two or three persons or they may be so big as to comprise all the inhabitants of a country, and, in the last resort, the entire human race. There are a few associations which may be said to be designed by nature. They fulfil requirements which spring from the innate constitution of man. The Family is one such association. Through it children are nurtured and the race perpetuates itself. The institution which is embodied in the family is, indeed, older than man himself. It is found, in a rudimentary form, among a number of species of animals. However, we are here concerned only with the human family. Anthropologists who have studied the early phases of human society tell us that man has always lived in some sort of family. The latter has assumed different forms from age to age or place to place but the fundamental features have, with rare exceptions, been the same. In the family which consists of husband and wife and their offspring, man and woman

<sup>1</sup> See L. T. Hobhouse, *Social Development*, pp. 48-49.

merge themselves into a common intimate life and the children are affectionately brought up to share it. It is easy to point to broken or disordered families where the intimacy between husband and wife is wanting or where children are neglected and ill-treated. But this is not true of the majority of families. In any case, the inferior sort of family marks a fall from the norm and is usually the victim of adverse social and economic circumstances or of individual misfits. As a rule, the family typifies a joint life of close intimacy and devoted care of children.

The family is a natural and indestructible unit of organisation. Its character and functions are such that it tends to evoke the warmest affections of the heart. Between the married couple, there is, or at any rate ought to be, an attachment so ardent as to suffuse the whole being. Many a father spends laborious days, if not sleepless nights, to provide for the conveniences and comfort of his children. Sometimes he passes a self-denying ordinance to defray the expenses of their education. No words can describe the devotion of the mother to the children. Her life is often an epic of self-less love and heroic abnegation. She merges herself so completely and so effortlessly in the care of the offspring that she might seem to live only for them. The utter helplessness of the babies tends to call forth the sympathies in the very strongest form. As they grow up, the children reciprocate the feelings and love their parents, specially the mother, with all their soul. Exceptions apart, this is more or less the general tendency of family life. It can sometimes be counteracted by adverse influence but on the whole it runs as a strong current. The family is thus the school of the affections. It draws them out early and strongly and usually tends to make them a permanent feature of life. Without them



life would lose its savour and scarcely be worth living. The sympathies and affections, once cultivated, transcend the bounds of the family and touch other relationships. They are responsible for friendships without which life is incomplete. They reinforce the social cohesion and spread a warm glow over relationships which would otherwise be cold and cheerless. As Mazzini said, the first lesson of citizenship is learnt between the mother's kiss and the father's caress.

Nevertheless, the family does present some psychological problems. Wherever two or more persons live together, they have to adjust their temperaments, their habits and, it may be, their interests to one another. If every one goes absolutely his own way, corporate life would scarcely be possible. The great thing about the family is that its affections make mutual adjustments easy and pleasant. Nevertheless, the whirl of life sometimes requires a conscious effort of adjustment. It is in the family that the habit of adjustment is first acquired. It reinforces the habits of adaptation which general social life necessitates and evokes. The family takes the individual, so to say, out of himself into a life of loyalty, co-operation and altruism. It teaches how to direct and command, for the sake of the common good. It teaches how to obey for the common good. It inspires hopes and aspirations for the future. A well ordered family effortlessly teaches respect for the rights of others. It brings the young into contact with the lives, the worries and joys of the life of elders.

The family also serves as a great school of general education. The latest researches in psychology prove that educationally the first five years, perhaps the first three years, are the most important in the life of a person. It has already been pointed

Family adjustments.

adjust-

out<sup>1</sup> that the child is inevitably initiated into the ideas and opinions current in the family. Here are formed the aesthetic tastes. Here is imbibed a great deal of information and also habits of thought. Here may be developed ambitions which may cling through life. There have been men like John Stuart Mill who laid the foundations not only of their whole education but also of their whole career, in the family. Statesmen like the younger Pitt learnt the principles of their craft in the family. One has only to read the biographies of the great men of the world to realise how immense was the debt which the majority of them owed to the precept, the example and the training of their parents in the family circle. And if the biographies of ordinary unfortunate people had been written, it would have been perceived how large a share the bad influences of the family had in wrecking their lives.<sup>2</sup>

The family is also an economic factor of the first magnitude. It earns as a whole and spends as a whole. The

The Family as an economic factor.      maintenance of the family is one of the leading motives in economic pursuits.

Often the family transmits a vocation from generation to generation. Farming is for the most

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, Ch. V, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Recently, the subject has been scientifically studied. "Different investigators have taken various components of the family and home environment: the economic status of the family, the characters of the parents, their occupation, their morality, their relationship, cleanliness of the home, the number of books in the home, the character of home furniture and so on. Having graded the families and homes according to one or several of these criteria, they have studied the correlations between these conditions and health, juvenile delinquency, criminality, suicide, insanity, feeble-mindedness, intelligence, genius, school and business success, and other personality traits—As a rule, the families and homes which have a better economic status, better home environment, honest and intelligent parents, and good relationship between them, yield a greater proportion of children with better health, superior intelligence, those successful in their school and business curriculum and a greater number of geniuses and men of talent . . ." Sorokin, *Contemporary Sociological Theories*, 713.

part hereditary. So, too, many other crafts. As we have already seen, every one ought to be free to choose any vocation but the strength of family influences renders it certain that many will follow the vocations of their fathers.

In order that the family may best fulfil its functions, it is desirable to surround it with favourable conditions.

Once again we come across education as indispensable to good life. The educated household is the foundation of the right kind of social life. The mother and father alike should be well educated and the children be provided with all facilities of instruction. The second requirement is, again, the economic minimum. Poverty has a tendency to create not only misery in the family. It produces irritations which the members vent upon one another. It may thus counteract the wholesome emotional tendencies which have been noted above as natural to the family. It may seriously interfere with the healthy up-bringing of the children. It is, therefore, greatly desirable that no family be allowed to fall below the economic minimum. Every family must have enough of wholesome food, clothing and shelter and other conveniences. This right to the economic minimum, with the correlated duty to work, is as valuable from the standpoint of the family as from the general standpoint of society. A third condition favourable to good family life is a correct understanding of its nature and necessary adjustments. An exceptionally egotistic person, failing to understand the character of family life, may decline to adjust his temperament to that of others and insist on imposing his own will on them. Such a course of conduct is calculated to cause explosions or to repress and distort the personality of the associates. An unreasonably overbearing father makes hypocrites of his children. Fourthly,

Favourable conditions for the family.

the perfect family life cannot be built on the basis of the subjection of woman. It can rest only on the basis of the equality of man and wife. All those who enter upon married life owe it to themselves and to their partners clearly to understand that it is, more than anything else, a corporate life in which personalities are to fuse together. At the same time it is desirable to refrain from putting too heavy a strain on one's capacity for the intimate adjustments of family life. A joint-family consisting of more than two generations and two or more couples of collaterals makes a serious draft on the tempers of all concerned. It may strain the harmony to the breaking-point and become a perennial source of discord. Such discord may render every one unhappy and seriously hamper the moral growth of children. In any case, a large joint family tends to project itself between a husband and wife, and creates a barrier to their free and intimate spiritual union.

It is up to society to set up standards of family life which will facilitate the necessary adjustments and obviate unnecessary ones. Society, again, has the right to see that the family performs its functions efficiently, and does not sit heavy on any of its own members. Society has to establish laws and generate a humane public opinion in order to prevent and punish gross ill-treatment to the women or children in the family. It has the right to see that the children,—the citizens of the morrow—are properly educated. It will be suicidal to allow parents to neglect their responsibilities. It is equally imperative to see that the family does not carry a person far away from his general duty to society. The family has been called nature's own clique. But as the foregoing discussion will have shown, its own interests demand a general social life of

The Family and  
Society.

a high standard. If society as a whole is sunk in poverty, ignorance and superstition, few families can hope to realise all the happiness of which they are capable. There is no such thing as an independent family. All families are interdependent in their objectives and have to co-operate in the common cause. The family is not justified in monopolising all the sympathy and affection of which its members are capable, and thus turning them into competitors, rather than co-operators, with those beyond. The correct attitude of the family is one of contribution to social good rather than of mere acquisition. The affections evoked by the family should be allowed to deepen and enliven the social sympathies. No justification can be adduced for sacrificing the interests of other families, that is to say, of society in general, at the altar of one's own family. Positively, every one should, to the best of his ability and means, further the moral and material welfare of society as a whole. The family, like the individual, may adopt as its motto: "Do to others as you would have others do to you."

A second caution in regard to family life concerns the relations of age and youth. At the approach of adolescence,

Age and Youth.      young persons often fail to understand the view-point of their seniors. They chafe under control. If they are intellectually alert, they resent being compelled to adhere to the religious or political opinions and the general outlook of the older generation. Sometimes they find themselves in ardent sympathy with new movements of thought and action which leave the elders cold or lukewarm. Devoid of ripe judgment and experience, they may embark on rash and impulsive conduct. Older people, in spite of the fact that they themselves were once young, may fail to appreciate the urges and aspirations of youth. Instead of guiding their expression,

they may seek to repress them as symptoms of thoughtless revolt. The conflict of age and youth is a perennial phenomenon. One of its modern manifestations is the Youth Movement which, as developed in Europe, seems to substitute the idealism of youth for the guidance of age in the race of life.

The differences of the old and the young are often resolved with the lapse of time but sometimes they involve a great deal of bitterness and also repression of personality. It is desirable

Reconciliation.

to reconcile them on the basis of a correct

psychological understanding. As a general rule, the young people should be allowed to develop their own opinions on all subjects. It is all to their good to have the advantages of advice and guidance from their elders but in the last resort it should rest with them to settle their convictions. In fact, they should be encouraged to think for themselves. This is in harmony with the principle of education which has been discussed above. So far as conduct is concerned, the young should submit to the control of the elders until the attainment of majority. Action is likely to be fraught with momentous consequences for their future and for society. If based on immature judgment and scanty experience, it may involve very grave risks and irreparable damage. Hence, minors cannot enjoy the same freedom in regard to action as is their due in regard to opinion. At the same time, the elders should permit as much liberty of action to the young as may be consistent with the interests of all concerned. On reaching majority, the young may be left to look after themselves, receiving all possible advice from the elders without being subject to constraint. Attempts to regulate the lives of grown-up people often run counter to the principle of self-realization. It follows that those who claim liberty of

action should not be financially dependent on their parents or others.

The family, educated and economically well off, placed in a favourable social environment, and reconciling liberty with guidance, would sweeten and enrich

The Family and Civic Life. life in an abundant measure. It would

be not merely the starting point, but also an integral part, of the wider civic life. It would be a source of inspiration and a haven of refuge from any troubles or disappointments.

## CHAPTER VII

### ASSOCIATIONS

THE family is an association of such vital significance that it has been singled out for separate treatment. But it has

The Function of Associations. already been pointed out that there are many other associations. The richer and more

varied the social life, the greater the number of associations. Personality develops in response to stimulus from the environment. As it develops, it reacts on others and receives reactions from others in all sorts of ways. Some of these reactions are of a more or less sustained character and thus involve a certain measure of co-operation. They are embodied in institutions and associations.<sup>1</sup> The function of every association is to facilitate the expression of part of personality and thus to fulfil a social need. No single association can exhaust all the possibilities of the self. Hence, the multiplicity and variety of associations.

Associations differ from one another in point of area of jurisdiction. Some are limited by the frontiers of a village or town; others cover a whole district or province; others are conterminous with a whole country. There are some asso-

The area of Associations.

ciations which transcend political bounds and are international in range. The same person may be a member of several associations. Associations are themselves interlaced with one another, exercising reciprocal influence of various sorts.

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*. Ch. VI, p. 58.



Associations also differ from one another in point of organisation. There are some which are completely or almost completely free from formalities and are held together only by community of a few beliefs or ceremonies. They may be scarcely distinguishable from unorganised groups. There are others which are rigidly organised and possess a regular machinery of government. Between these extremes there are numerous intermediate types. Some associations include minor associations as part of their make-up, while these in their turn comprise yet smaller ones and so on. Associations thus form a very complicated social net-work. From its intricacies it is easy to infer that while many associations are fairly durable, few can be absolutely fixed and permanent. Frequently they lose old members and gain new ones; their character, their relations with others, their ways of action alter with the environment. Old associations pass away and new ones arise.

The associations, formal and informal, organised and unorganised, are so numerous and their functions so various, that it is impossible to classify them exhaustively. However, the principal associations may be grouped under seven heads; (1) Kinship, (2) Religious, (3) Cultural, (4) Vocational, (5) Recreational, (6) Philanthropic and (7) Political. The classification, however, inevitably suffers from two shortcomings. Firstly, it is not exhaustive. Secondly, it cannot avoid some overlapping. For instance; it is difficult clearly to demarcate Religious from Cultural or Philanthropic associations. Again, Vocational associations are sometimes allied to the principle of kinship and often possess a deep political significance.

Political associations, specially the state, have a bearing on every branch of associated life.

Of the kinship associations, the family is the most important. It is found to be closely allied to the kinship group

among primitive peoples and many  
 Kinship      Associa-      civilised peoples in ancient times. The  
 tions.

kinship group appears in the form of the phratry, the *gotra*, the genes or the clan in various lands. A number of clans sometimes joined together and formed a tribe. Clans or tribes often had their governing councils, assemblies and chiefs. In some communities, the kinship group has survived as an endogamous group, within which alone marriage can be contracted. The endogamous group usually contains a number of exogamous groups, within which no marriage can be contracted. Thus a caste includes fraternities, which comprise families. As an association, caste may be very informal or it may possess a governing body like a *panchayat* and lay down rigid rules on food, manners, conduct and marriage sanctioned by various penalties and, in the last resort, by excommunication. It is not necessary here to discuss the origin, the advantages and disadvantages of caste. From the civic standpoint, however, it must be pointed out that caste is baneful if it narrows the outlook and sympathies and intercepts the loyalty due to society at large. To think in terms of caste about problems of general—political, social or economic—interest is to side-track their solution. Caste militates against the civic principle if it hampers co-operation in national or international activities. Caste may be held to be a negation of civic life, whenever it violates the dignity of man as man, denies equality of opportunity to any one or sacrifices merit to accidents of kinship.

In ancient times kinship and religion were often allied to each other, for instance, in Greece, Rome and Persia. Even to-day a kinship group generally adheres to the same creed. But for the most part religion, specially of the monotheistic type, has liberated itself from the principle of kinship. The followers of a religion may be altogether unorganised and may just dimly realize themselves as a single group by virtue of some common beliefs and ritual. Or they may be held together by a well-knit organisation which may sometimes, as in the case of the Roman Catholic Church, transcend the barriers of countries and continents. Sometimes the followers of a religion are divided into sects and sub-sects so that there arise associations within associations. It has been pointed out above that every one is entitled to liberty of religious belief, prayer and worship, subject to the proviso that objectionable social practices are not allowed to masquerade in the guise of religion. The same holds good of religious associations. Their freedom of religious belief, prayer and worship is never to be questioned. But they have no right to declare any social malpractices as religious and resist their reform. The principle is that practices which result in a denial of equality of opportunity to their members or outsiders should be open to revision through legislation or public opinion. On the educational side, religious associations ought to refrain from compulsorily imposing their dogmas on educational institutions. For such a course of action is calculated to hamper the development of the young mind or to induce a demoralising make-believe. A third civic requisite is that every religious group should freely concede to others the liberty which it claims for itself. Not merely is it bound to renounce all thoughts of persecution but it should also

Religious Associations.

cultivate an attitude of full tolerance towards all religions. It should neither claim any peculiar privileges for itself, nor deny any rights to others, on the score of religious conviction. The theological temperament is out of place in political, as in economic, affairs.

Cultural associations comprise not only schools, colleges and universities but also learned societies, and academies, literary or dramatic clubs, study circles etc. They may consist of a few members in a small area or they may comprise

Cultural Associations.

thousands of members from all over a province or a country. There are now many associations for the promotion of scientific and philosophic studies which are international in scope. Cultural associations also federate themselves into central bodies or establish local branches. The degree of organisation varies from one association to another. Whatever their external character, their essential purpose is broadly the same. They perform the invaluable function of diffusing and advancing knowledge and refining the tone of social life. Something has already been said about them in connection with education. From the civic standpoint it may be emphasised here that cultural associations perform their functions most efficiently when they refuse to be deflected from the disinterested pursuit of truth by sectarian or political prejudices. Culture makes the best progress and yields the best results when it is pursued in a catholic spirit and in an atmosphere of freedom. Knowledge, by its very nature, is expansive and is stifled by artificial limitations. All cultural associations should keep in view the disinterested pursuit of truth, its widest possible diffusion, and breadth of vision. Every cultural association is to be a radiant centre of light and learning.

One of the oldest types of Association is the vocational. Village communities of agriculturists and guilds of industrialists and tradesmen ~~have existed in~~ practically every civilised country from the earliest times. Every vocation displays a tendency to self-government. Its members understand its conditions best and long to determine the terms of admission and apprenticeship to it, to set up standards for its working and, so far as possible, to settle the remuneration for its services or products. They tend to develop the same habits of thought and the same outlook on life and, therefore, to flock together into a formal or informal association. Towards the close of the eighteenth century and the commencement of the nineteenth century, the Industrial Revolution began to transform the economic life of the world. Ever since, the conditions of production, exchange and distribution have been growing exceedingly complex. The range of economic operations has widened beyond all precedent, and brought the world into a single orbit. Social life has not yet fully adjusted itself to the deeper economic and political implications of the possibilities revealed by applied science. During the period of transition, the chances of economic clash have multiplied. This has accentuated the tendency to vocational organisation and imparted to it a fresh significance. Landlords, peasants, agricultural labourers, factory workers of a thousand kinds, mine-owners and miners, dock workers, mill-owners, seamen, railway-men, postmen, builders, tradesmen—retailers and wholesalers—dealing in numerous classes of goods,—all are now organising themselves. Professions like those of medicine, law, teaching, police, engineering and civil service, have followed suit and set up councils, chambers, associations and federations of their own. Vocational associations, like cultural ones, may

be local, regional, national or international. They may be loose in texture or they may be organised and disciplined like armies. Economic life is thus dominated by the factor of association, with important consequences to social, cultural and political activities as well. Between associations clashes have been frequent and sometimes very serious, specially those between capitalists and labourers, peasants and landlords. Agrarian disturbances and industrial strikes and lockouts have been a prominent feature in the recent history of many countries.

The situation, created by the operations of vocational associations, must be examined by the student of civics in the light of the principle of equal opportunity to all. From such a dispassionate examination some important conclusions emerge. Firstly, vocational associations should not base themselves on caste or religion. If they do so, they accentuate their exclusiveness and deepen the risk of ignoring the general interest. Secondly, the associations should treat their vocations as liberal professions, as channels of self-expression and social service, not as avenues of mere profits. All those connected with agriculture, industry or commerce, with medicine, law or any other vocation, should set up high standards of efficiency and integrity and insist on their members rising to them. None should try to shirk his responsibility, nor to live on the earnings of others. None should follow a vocation merely in order to earn a livelihood, much less to accumulate riches. He should follow it also as a way of finding himself, of putting his energies and talents to the best use, of expressing his social sympathies in a regular, sustained manner. It should be the business of the associations to uphold the social purpose of every vocation as a point of honour. It is only in this manner that vocational

Guiding principles  
for Vocational Associations.

organisations can function on the principle of equality of opportunity. Otherwise, they tend to grab more than their fair share and to wrangle with others. This is not to argue that vocational associations should neglect the interests of their own members. The point is that these interests should be harmonised with the general interest and that the idea of contribution to social welfare should not be subordinated to that of acquisition for one's own group. This social and ethical element must be incorporated into all vocations. It will ennoble every calling, diminish the chances of economic clash, and enhance the welfare of all. For instance, a landlord should not merely appropriate part-earnings of others but should contribute his level best to the improvement of the tillage, enhancement of the incomes of the tenants and elevation of the whole standard of life in general in the rural areas. A lawyer should promote the ends of justice by strictly adhering to the truth and clearing the issues involved. Associations of government servants should not merely think of salaries, allowances and pensions but also think out ways of improving the administration and promoting the welfare of the people. A Labour Union should try to increase and improve the output and not be content merely with safe-guarding its own standard of wages and conditions of work. And so on.

Such is the civic ideal of economic pursuits. Its attainment in any particular vocation depends, *inter alia*, on two reforms. Firstly, the more the economic system as a whole is grounded in justice, the easier will it be for a vocational association to keep the general good in view in all its operations. It is, therefore, desirable to banish injustice from economic arrangements. Universal education and economic minimum will form a solid foundation for economic justice.

Justice in Economic Life.

Beyond them it is necessary to accept and enforce the principles of equitable distribution of the gains of corporate enterprise, adequate leisure and healthy conditions of work for all. Secondly, it is desirable to enhance the dignity and self-respect of those engaged in economic pursuits by giving them a voice in managing the internal affairs of fields, factories and workshops. As we shall see, a great deal of state regulation of economic life is now necessary more than ever before. But within its limits and subject to efficiency, peasants, workers, and others should be consulted through organised bodies about common concerns.

The state, as the representative of the general interest, is entitled to intervene in serious clashes between vocational associations which may threaten the public welfare. It should delegate to its agents powers of providing arbitration, adjudication and settlement when relations between landlords and tenants, or between employers and labourers become strained. It is entitled to seek more durable solutions of economic difficulties by planning the enhancement of national wealth and re-organisation of economic institutions on the principle of equal opportunity to all.<sup>1</sup>

In sharp contrast to religious, cultural or vocational associations, those concerned with recreation raise no difficult problems. Sports clubs and entertainment societies can occupy but a small place in the life of the average man and can but rarely infringe on the public welfare. From the standpoint of civic welfare, the only caution necessary is that entertainment should be wholesome, both physically and

<sup>1</sup> See *infra*, Ch. VIII, p. 108.



morally. The true objective is not dissipation but recreation for fresh thinking and activity.

Philanthropic associations are an expression of the urge to social service. There ought to be an element of social

Philanthropic As-  
sociations.

service in every vocation. But the term philanthropy specifically denotes activity from which motives of personal gain are altogether absent. Life is incomplete, if not miserable, without some activity prompted by love of the popular welfare. Individuals relieve a great deal of suffering and distress. But organisation enables them to do so more cheaply and effectively. It enables them expeditiously to relieve the distress caused by fire, famine, flood and epidemics; to run big dispensaries, hospitals, orphanages, widows' homes, libraries, schools and other educational institutions; to lift submerged classes and to raise the standard of life of workers and peasants. Philanthropic associations mobilise a substantial part of the altruistic feeling in society. It is up to them to organise it to maximum advantage. Philanthropic activity goes the longest way if it is inspired by large vision and large purpose. One of the encouraging signs of the times is the growth of philanthropic associations to national and international dimensions. Thoughtless charity sometimes pampers to sheer indolence and turns out to be a remedy worse than the disease. If it is based on a correct diagnosis of social ills, it may do something towards a permanent improvement. In regard to individual relief, philanthropy should encourage people to stand on their own legs and should not habituate them to dependence. This is in accord with the civic principle of development of personality. For instance, it is much better to put a man to work than to support him by charity. The cure of disease is excellent but its prevention is better still. The promotion of hygienic and

sanitary ways of living is more useful than the foundation of hospitals. To remove the root causes of poverty is more meritorious than to help poor people. Philanthropy thus depends for maximum efficacy not only on good and charitable intentions but also on insight into social conditions, on organisation, and on large purpose.

The membership of most of the associations dealt with so far is voluntary. No one is compelled to belong to a specific religious, cultural, vocational, recreational or philanthropic association.

Political Associations.

There are many who renounce them after a period of membership. It is otherwise with the State, which is the political association *par excellence*. Its membership is compulsory. If one leaves a particular state, one merely exchanges it for another state. There is no escape from the obligations which the state, as such, imposes. The state wields enormous force and enjoys high prestige. It performs functions which no other association can satisfactorily perform. Thanks to its great power, it undertakes, whenever it be necessary, to co-ordinate the spheres and activities of other associations. The state is thus an association but it is an association different in some vital respects from others. Within the state there are other associations like the Municipality resting on the territorial basis. All these are political associations. There are also political associations of a different character, those whose membership is voluntary. They are political parties or associations to advocate specific political programmes. They are often intertwined with religious, cultural, vocational, and even philanthropic bodies. The voluntary character is also shared by another type of political association which has lately come into some prominence—the international political association such as the League of Nations.

Social control is rarely concentrated at a single point in any society. It is shared by all associations and, in addition,

Social Control.                      by custom, opinion and outstanding leadership. There is no sovereign in the sense that he can do whatever he likes, even with the cherished religions and social customs and practices. Sovereignty is diffused throughout the community and even beyond it. Nor is there any fixity about its distribution. It varies from age to age, place to place and group to group. For instance, religious codes and priests were much more influential five hundred years ago than they are to-day. And at present some people are influenced by them more than others. Vocational associations practically ruled some cities during the later Middle Ages in Europe. To-day capitalist associations are powerful in some countries; labour unions are powerful in others. Public opinion carries much greater weight in some countries and in some periods than in others. And so forth. But the largest share in social control has fallen, in historical times as at present, to political associations. The latter stand in a class by themselves. They are so important, specially under modern conditions, that it is necessary to inquire further into their genesis and their bearing on civic life.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE STATE

All associations have their roots in man's sociality and in the need of co-operative behaviour. In this sense they are

The State is both natural and artificial. all natural. But in their development and form there enters a good deal of conscious effort and design. In this sense

all associations are artificial. It is true that the natural element is much more prominent in some associations than in others. The distinction between the natural and the artificial is useful in studies but it must not be pushed too far. Nature or inheritance only supplies capacities, that is, potentialities. It depends on the environment how those capacities unfold themselves and in what institutional forms they embody themselves. By dint of his thought and endeavour man can, at least partly, control the environment and affect the unfoldment of his own capacities. So, the natural and the artificial fade by imperceptible degrees into each other and, in ultimate philosophic analysis, are indistinguishable from each other. The state, then, may be said to be both natural and artificial, that is to say, it is rooted in innate capacities and necessities and its form and constitution result from the exigencies of the environment and from human effort and design.

Social life presents numerous aspects but they are all connected with one another. Accordingly, an association often touches more than one interest and fulfils more than

one purpose. The state, in particular, affects life in a variety of ways.

The state arose to organise co-operation for ends which only combined effort could achieve and to remove obstacles from the pathways of social life. Where

The Origin of the State. irrigation had to be looked after in com-

mon as in Egypt and Mesopotamia, or

floods had to be averted by common effort as in China, people organised themselves as a State, that is to say, they formed a political association to ensure and organise co-operation.

Again, communities often went to war with one another over the resources of sustenance, or from other causes. War depends, more than anything else, on co-operation, mobilisa-

tion of resources and on leadership. It was an important factor in bringing the state into existence and in perpetuating it. Wars also exercised a far-reaching influence on human re-

lationships. They brought about relations of overlordship and subjection in varying degrees. The master-class began to use the resources and machinery of the state to make the sub-

ject class toil for themselves and minister to their various needs. Thus the state based itself partly on force. At the same time, various forms of wealth had grown up and their

distribution had become unequal. The state undertook to protect the property of all and, among other things, to secure the wealthy in their wealth. Political, social and economic

inequalities resulted in the formation of a number of classes. Their relations called for some sort of adjustment and har-

mony. The need was fulfilled by the state, along with other agencies. It fell to the state to maintain the social order. There was yet another purpose which the state began to per-

form. It supplied adjudication in disputes which were bound to arise and which, unless peacefully settled, might lead to vendetta, bloodshed and disorder.

The state has been treated above as a political association, territorial in its basis and compulsory in its membership. Before analysing its various

The State and Government. features it is necessary to explain the significance of another expression,

Government. The terms State and Government are often used as synonymous. To be more accurate, the State is an association with Government as its executive organ. Thus, all the inhabitants of the territory are members of the state but only some are members of the government. Even if all have a hand in settling the policy of the state, only a few are principally concerned to give effect to it. It is they who constitute the government. Governments may change rapidly but the state persists as the same entity. With reference to governments the state may say, like Tennyson's Brook, "Men may come and men may go, But I go on for ever." The State is a great and lasting partnership based on ineradicable factors. Government is a transient arrangement within the state, liable to change according to convenience.

Philosophically, the distinction between State and Government is quite clear. Government is part of the State but is not identical with the State. It

State and Government in practice. should, however, be emphasised that government is an inevitable and indis-

pensable part of the State. Without government the state would cease to function and, therefore, would practically cease to exist. One government may be replaced by another and the latter by a third one and so on. But some government there must be, if there is to be a state at all. This is the reason why no discussion of the state can proceed far without becoming a discussion of government. There is

yet another reason why government is a factor of the highest importance in the State. By force of traditions and arrangements, a large number of people are silent partners in the State. They pay taxes and discharge some other obligations. They may enjoy security and some other benefits. But for the rest they do not concern themselves with politics. Power and direction accordingly pass for the most part into the hands of those interested in politics for some reason or other and, pre-eminently into the hands of those who constitute the government. In any case the powers-that-be enjoy high authority and give a tone to the political life of the community at large. They cannot escape the social and economic influences of the times; nor can they be indifferent to the expressions of public opinion. But this only proves that the politically organised community expresses itself in a special manner through government. Here lies the genesis of the risk to which the State has often been exposed. Its Government may fall into the hands of a well-knit group which fails to understand or sympathise with the views and requirements of others and which is tempted to legislate and administer in terms of its own experience.

The functions which the state arose to perform have clung to it, more or less, ever since. It has organised co-operation for economic and other com-

The functions of  
the State.

mon ends. It has waged wars, defending its own territory and invading that of others. It has maintained order and adjudicated disputes. It has furnished security and often supported the supremacy of the powerful classes. It has regulated property. The state has not been perfect any more than other associations. Its membership has comprised all the inhabitants of its territory but its power has often been handled by a section of

them, partly in their exclusive interest. Now, the functions of the state have not been uniform in their details in various times and places. They have varied according to the ideas and needs of the communities and the influence of various classes and associations. There have been instances in which the might of the state has been used to further a specific creed or code of morality. Elsewhere it has been exerted, above all, to maintain the social status quo. Many states have been closely identified with the economic interests—agricultural, industrial, commercial or financial—of their people or of certain classes and have used their military strength and prestige to further those interests, sometimes in disregard of the interests of other peoples. States have often patronised and fostered literature, the fine arts and education. They have, specially in modern times, promoted public health and sanitation, relief of poverty and distress and tried to raise the whole standard of life. The various functions have been performed with an efficiency which has varied with the knowledge, judgment, resources, and prestige at the disposal of governments and with the measure of general support from within and security from without. The efficiency of governments has sometimes been almost perfect and sometimes fallen almost to zero. If one were to review all that the states have done in the past and are doing at present, it will appear that there is scarcely a conceivable function which they have not performed or which they have not neglected at some time or other, in some country or other. (In regard to functions, then, the State is not an absolute fixture. It is eminently flexible, capable of reform and perversion in all directions.) It is, therefore, doubly necessary in the interests of Civic life to study the role of State and Government.



The causes of the origin of the state and its functions furnish a clue to the fundamental bases on which the state

The Bases of the State. rests. In early stages of social development the kinship group formed a sort of state. The state was thus based on kin-

ship. On a wider scale, "race" has often formed a basis of the state. Anthropologists tell us that all races have got mixed in the course of history and that there is no pure race. None the less, a group often differs from others in various respects and thinks of itself as a distinct 'race'. Such a race sometimes tends to form the mainstay of a state. Thus, one of the bases of the state is real or supposed ethnic homogeneity. The most important of all the bases of the state is neighbourhood or territory. Those, inhabiting a definite territory necessarily find a good many interests in common. Usually, they speak the same language or allied languages and develop the same outlook on life. They have to defend the same territory from outsiders and develop the resources of the same for their use. Neighbourhood or territory thus forms the most significant factor in the formation of the state. Religion has often lent its aid in the development of the state and given valuable support to its institutions. Priests have sometime been rulers and sometimes advisors and guides of rulers. Various classes have formed another basis of the state. Landlords, capitalists, middle class, peasants, artisans, higher castes, lower castes—on one or more of them many governments have relied for support. Force has usually been another of the bases of the state. It is not indeed the sole basis; no government can rest entirely on force. But force has so far been one of the important factors in the State. In contradistinction to it, consent has also been a basis of the state. A government may receive the active consent of some and the passive acquiescence of

other sections of society. (Thus, apart from the innate constitution of man and the inherent demands of associated life, the chief bases of the state are kinship, race, neighbourhood, religion, classes, force and consent.) Different governments and the same government at different times, have rested on one, and usually more than one, of these bases. They necessarily operate together and it is difficult to distinguish their contribution to the joint result.

States and governments can be classified according to the bases on which they rest, the functions they perform, the manner in which their power is exercised and the personnel with whom the power is located. Since the days of Plato many classifications of states have been offered.

Classification of States and Governments. These classifications are not mutually exclusive, that is to say, the same state or government falls into various categories according to various standpoints. In point of territory, there may be *city-states* as in ancient Greece and Rome or *country-states* as in later times in Europe and all times in the East. A state may be so dominated by priests as to be a *theocracy*. Or it may be a *secular* state, free from priestly influence. A government may be *despotic*, acting as it likes, regardless of rules or it may be *constitutional*, acting according to rules. Plato and Aristotle also divided states into *law-states*, acting in the interests of the people, and *caprice-states* or perverted states functioning in the interests of a class. Between the two, there are many intermediate grades. From the Greeks also comes the best known of all classifications of states or governments—*monarchy*, *aristocracy* or

City-state and country-state.

Theocratic and secular states.

Despotic and constitutional.

Law-states and Caprice-states.

oligarchy and *democracy*—according as power is exercised by one man, or by a few or by the many. It may, however, be urged that every Monarchy must depend on the support of a class, big or small, and hence possess an aristocratic tinge. Or the monarch may be only the dignified head of the state, which, for all practical purposes, may be an aristocracy or democracy. A democracy again may so function as to throw a great deal of power into the hands of a small body of persons. It may thus, in practice, acquire an oligarchic character. The fact is that society usually throws up neither pure monarchies, nor pure aristocracies, nor pure democracies but mixed forms of government. Monarchic, aristocratic and democratic elements may be *mixed* in diverse proportions. There have been in the past, and there are to-day, states of which it is difficult to say whether they are monarchies or aristocracies. There are others which may pass for democracies as well as for aristocracies. Democracy may be direct, as in ancient Greece where all the citizens gathered together in an assembly. Or it may be indirect as in modern times where the people, too numerous to come together, elect representative assemblies.

From yet another standpoint, states are divided into *Unitary* and *Federal*. In the former authority is exercised from a single centre; there is but one legislature, one supreme judicature and one supreme executive. England, France, Belgium, Holland etc., may be cited at random as illustrations. In a federal state, on the other hand, authority is divided between the Federal Government and the governments of a number of component units. The latter perform some functions and exercise some powers of a legislative, executive and judicial character. The other functions are performed

Monarchy, Aristocracy and Democracy.

Unitary and Federal States.

and the other powers exercised by the Federal Government. There is often a sphere of concurrent jurisdiction in which either can move, though the Federation has usually the prior right to move or has the right to issue directions. In any case there is double government, double allegiance and double loyalty in a federation. The obvious illustrations are the United States, Switzerland, the Australian Commonwealth and the Dominion of Canada.

A Federation is a state in the true sense of the term. The case is different with another political formation called

*Confederation.* It is not a state in the strict sense; it is a union of states for certain specific purposes. It stands midway between a Federation and a mere alliance. A Confederation does not possess a common executive or a common legislature. It deliberates and issues directions on some common affairs. It may, however, have a common judicature for certain purposes. It may develop a common policy in commerce, or foreign and military affairs. The German Zollverein between 1835 and 1866 supplies an illustration. The New England States between 1776 and 1787 also constituted a Confederation.

Reverting to Unitary states, they may be highly *centralised* or *decentralised*. In the latter case a good deal of self-government is conceded to villages, towns and districts. A component state of a Federation can also conform to either

Centralised and  
Decentralised states.

type. Thus, the states of the American Union and also unitary states like England allow a great deal of autonomy to local bodies. There are other states like France which have adopted a policy of centralisation and bestowed only meagre responsibility on localities.

Despotic states have no constitution in the strict sense

of the term. They are ruled according to the will of the sovereign. Constitutional states are those where the powers of the different organs of government are defined and are exercised according to definite rules. It is true that the powers or functions cannot be entirely separated. The legislature inevitably affects the executive and *vice versa*; while both have an important bearing on the system of judicature. The courts apply the laws passed by the Legislature and also fill in the gaps through rulings. The executive gives effect to the decisions of the courts but sometimes it also grants pardons and makes bye-laws or passes ordinances of an important character. The parts of government are inter-dependent but this makes it all the more necessary to lay down rules for their operation. This is the purpose of a constitution. It represents the rule of law as distinct from the rule of caprice.

A constitution may be a *written* one, that is to say, the main principles and arrangements and sometimes even minor matters may be incorporated in a single document, so to say, in an instrument of government. But the operation of government changes with the times and the written constitution is supplemented for practical purposes by conventions, usages and understandings. Again, there are constitutions which, though written, deal only with a few matters. They have to be rounded off by ordinary legislation and by conventions. All this means that no constitution can be a wholly written one. France has a written constitution but there are in it many gaps which have been otherwise filled up. The United States has a very elaborate and written constitution but many important matters, not exactly covered by the constitution, are now regulated by usages.

*An unwritten constitution* is one in which many important matters do not form the subject of any statutes or organic law at all. They are managed

Unwritten constitution.

according to the traditions, usages and conventions which have evolved in the course of history. England is the example, *par excellence*, of an unwritten constitution. Here the position of the Cabinet, the relations of the Crown with the Cabinet and Parliament, the powers of the Prime Minister, the relations of the Cabinet and Parliament—all these are not defined by law. They have been settled in the course of constitutional development and are covered by understandings. But the English constitution is not a wholly unwritten one. For instance, the franchise has always been governed by law. The relations of the House of Commons and the House of Lords are now governed by law. The conclusion which emerges is that no constitution is wholly written or wholly unwritten but that some constitutions have a larger written element than others. The distinction is valuable for purposes of study but it is a distinction of degree rather than of kind.

The written constitution serves to define the powers and functions of the various organs of government. But

Uses of written constitutions.

since it possesses a superior sanctity and prestige, it has been used to serve some additional purposes. It has usually contained a declaration of rights, such as the rights to religious and cultural freedom, to association and public meeting, to equality before the law and to education. It has further been used to make certain duties obligatory on the executive or the legislature, to issue to them directions on some important and delicate matters and to prohibit them from certain courses of action. All this is done by the people

to protect themselves from the whims and caprices of the legislature and the executive. The guarantees serve to reassure the minorities and to strengthen the chances of self-realization. Sometimes, indeed, the constitutional guarantees are thrown to the winds and passion has all its own way. But in normal times they have a distinct purpose to fulfil and have an important bearing on civic life.

From another point of view, constitutions are classified as *Rigid* and *Flexible*. The latter are those which can be altered by the Legislature according to the procedure that is used for ordinary legislation. The English constitution is a flexible one. When any constitutional changes are deemed necessary, they are made by the Legislature in ordinary form, as for instance the changes in the relations of the two chambers of the Legislature in 1911 and in the Franchise in 1918 and 1928. It is different with Rigid Constitutions. They can be altered only by some special procedure. This may interpose serious difficulties as in the case of the United States or it may be comparatively simple as in the case of France. It is not necessary to go into details but it may be borne in mind that the special procedure for the amendment of rigid constitutions may vary from a joint meeting of the two chambers or a specified majority in voting to popular referendum, general elections, and special conventions with special majorities. The rigidity of constitutions is thus a matter of degree. In point of facility of amendment, the French Constitution, though rigid, stands nearer the flexible English Constitution than the rigid American Constitution. Besides, whatever the procedure, the amendment of constitutions depends mainly on public opinion. Hence, the distinction between Rigid and Flexible constitutions, though valuable for purposes of analysis, should not, any more than

Right and Flexible  
constitutions.

the distinction between Written and Flexible constitutions, be pressed too far. A rigid and written constitution is suited to federations where powers have to be divided between the federation and the component units and any apprehensions of the latter have to be set at rest. A constitution of a similar character is suited to a people just starting on a career of responsible government.

From the standpoint of the relations between the executive and the legislature, constitutional governments can be classified as *Parliamentary* and *Presidential*. Under the latter, the President as the chief of the Executive is elected directly by the people or their representatives for a fixed term and is not responsible to the Legislature. He and his colleagues do not sit in the Legislature and cannot be dismissed by it. Here, then, the powers of government are separated to a certain extent. Under the Parliamentary system, the real executive is responsible to the legislature and liable to dismissal by it. The principal members of the executive sit in the Legislature and constantly influence it and are influenced by it.

A parliamentary executive is usually headed by a Prime Minister as in England, France, Canada etc. The Prime Minister enjoys a distinct pre-eminence and exercises a certain measure of authority over the other ministers. Under Presidential government, the authority of the President is still greater, as in the United States. There is, however, a third type of executive in which the ministers are equal among themselves and the Chief or President enjoys a very slight superiority to them. This is called the *Collegiate Executive* and arose first in Switzerland. There the ministers are all elected by the Legislature and loyally carry out



its policy. By turns they become Vice-Presidents and Presidents of the Federation and are then only the first among equals.

There is yet another basis on which governments resting on representation may be divided. Their legislatures may be *Unicameral* or *Bicameral*. Under the former system the legislature consists of a single chamber as in Bulgaria, Mexico, and a few other states. Under the latter system it consists of two chambers as in most of the states to-day. It is not necessary here to discuss the arguments for and against the bicameral system. It is enough to point out that in Federations the Second Chamber serves the purpose of representing the state principle as distinct from the popular principle, pure and simple. In all states the Second Chamber performs the function of revision and discussion and often interposes delays in what it deems to be hasty or inadvisable legislation. The power of granting money usually rests with the Lower Chamber. Both together pass Acts.

Such are the various classifications of states and governments. As between the city-state and the country-state, there is now no question of a choice. We are bound to live in the country-state. Nor is there much room for choice between a theocracy and a secular state. Now that people, even within the same state, follow different religions, it is best to free the state from all priestly influences. The state should rest on purely secular ground and neither countenance nor persecute any particular religion. Again, it is plain that every state should be constitutional, not despotic. The rule of law alone can inspire confidence and a sense of security. Without it the state loses a great deal of its utility and often causes positive damage to the life of the people. Every

Suitability of types  
of Government.

government must function according to law. It is equally clear that no state should belong to the category of caprice or perverted states. It should function not in the interests of the rulers themselves or of any particular class but in the interests of the whole people. It is morally bound to keep general welfare always before itself and make it the basis of all policy and action. So far it is possible to generalise. Beyond this no form of government can be regarded as the best under all circumstances. It depends on the totality of circumstances what type of government will suit a country at a given time. The search for an ideal government, irrespective of time and place, is futile. It is thus possible only to offer some general observations on the suitability of the various forms of government, with reference to present times. For the rest it is necessary to inquire in every specific case what political arrangements are, under the given circumstances, best calculated to foster the civic life.

A federal form of Government is obviously suited to large countries like the United States, Canada, Australia and India. But experience has shown that it is desirable to vest the federal government with powers sufficient to deal not only with foreign affairs, and defence etc., but also with problems of economic development on national and international lines. In an age of rapid locomotion, it is not only advantageous but also sometimes inevitable to manage and plan the national welfare as a whole and to co-ordinate it with the welfare of humanity. The doctrine of 'states rights', then, cannot be pressed too far. The same considerations apply to devolution of authority on local bodies. As we shall see later,<sup>1</sup> there are some great advantages in vesting a considerable measure of power

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<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, Ch. IX.

in village *panchayats*, in municipalities, in district boards and similar other bodies but it is not safe to carry decentralisation so far as to hamper national planning. In regard to constitutions, the only general remark that can be offered is that written and rigid constitutions are best to start with. No country can afford to wait for centuries for traditions to grow up and issue in unwritten and flexible constitutions. It is desirable to set up written and rigid constitutions, specially in the case of federations, and then allow them to develop. No general observations, however, can be made as to the extent to which a constitution should be written and rigid. That must depend on the circumstances of the country and the age. Nor, again, can any general prescription be made in regard to the form of the executive in self-governing countries. Experience has shown that usually parliamentary government works more smoothly, expeditiously and efficiently than presidential government but it is impossible to dogmatise on the matter. The collegiate executive seems to be suited only to a small country with such favourable social and economic conditions as Switzerland can show.

The keenest controversy has centred round the respective merits of monarchic, aristocratic and democratic forms of government. For a scientific understanding of the question, it is necessary to emphasize two preliminary considerations. Firstly, none of these forms of government holds true absolutely for all countries and all times. Secondly, mixed forms of government are possible and have frequently been set up. Subject to these provisos, the monarchy seems suitable to comparatively simple societies, believing in some sort of Divine Right of kings, and lacking the ambition or the cohesion, requisite for self-government.

Democracy *versus*  
other forms of  
government.

The danger of foreign invasion or general insecurity also favours the concentration of authority. As to aristocracy, it is interesting to recall that in Greek the word meant the rule of the best. Aristocracy is suitable to conditions in which a single class, marked out by birth, wealth, function or talent as pre-eminent, is generally recognised as fit to rule and wins public confidence, while the people at large are neither qualified nor eager to shoulder the burdens of responsible government. It will be observed that under the monarchic and aristocratic regimes the political rights do not exist for the mass of the people. Thus, the civic life cannot attain to fulness. Besides, neither monarchy nor aristocracy is suitable as a form of government when the ruling class begins to serve its own interest at the expense of others, or when it fails to mobilise the common resources of wealth, knowledge, experience and organisation to promote the general welfare, or when it loses public confidence and veneration or when the people themselves outgrow the tutelage and claim self-government. Under such circumstances the democratic element forces its way to the seats of authority and brings about mixed forms of government. Democracy is suited to a state of society in which the people want to exercise power, are capable of sinking minor differences and co-operating for the general good, and have acquired knowledge and judgment enough to elect suitable representatives and judge as to the propriety of general lines of policy.

The character of every government inevitably reflects the intellectual and moral penumbra as well as the distribution of wealth in society. All these conditions are very complex. Hence, government also bears a complex character. It may comprise monarchic, aristocratic and democratic elements in ever-changing proportions. The supreme

The merits of  
Democracy.

value of the democratic element in the composition of government is that it secures the consultation of the interests of all in the formulation of policy. History is replete with records of governments which were so obsessed with narrow sectionalism that they neither understood nor cared for the welfare of the whole population. Accordingly, they did not do all that they might have done to bring about conditions favourable to self-realization. It is desirable to arrange for the regular organized, and authoritative presentation of the opinions and interests of all sections of the populace. The essence of democratic government is that the machinery of the state be directed by the people for the benefit of the people. The great advantage which it possesses is that it can draw on all the talent in the community. It can rouse energies of thought and action which lie dormant under the tutelage of princes and aristocrats. Not the least recommendation of democracy is its educational value in the highest sense of the term. It stirs the waters as nothing else can. It is government by discussion and serves to awaken the popular mind and to favour the emergence of ideas. Equally important is the moral value of democracy. No other form of government so clearly acknowledges the principle of the infinite worth of individuality. It raises the stature of man and enhances his self-respect.

Democracy is more than a form of government. It is a principle of organisation, an attitude towards society, a way of life. It proceeds on the axiom that the happiness of every person counts for as much as the happiness of any one else and that no body is to be regarded as a mere means to the happiness of others. It lays down that every one must have an equal opportunity of realising himself. Democratic government is the political counterpart of this ideal and an

Democracy as a way of life.

instrument of translating it continually into practice. It will be observed that the fundamental implications of the democratic way of life are the same as those of truly civic life. Democratic government, as a means of realising the civic life, tends to multiply contacts and opportunities of co-operation in the community and aims at maximising the welfare of all.

But as an instrument of government, democracy is not easy to manage. The history of popular institutions in ancient times and specially in the modern age has proved that the success of democratic government depends, not on perfection of constitutions but on certain

Requisites of Democratic Government.

conditions in the environment and on certain qualities in the people. If these are lacking, there is a risk of government falling into the hand of military captains, plutocrats, professional politicians of the lower calibre, or a dictator. In that case the advantages of a democratic constitution may be more than neutralised. It has already been hinted that democracy is incompatible with militarism. So long as the relations of communities are ruled by

Peace.

force, democracy cannot have a fair chance in the world. The basis of democracy is persuasion and accomodation, the very antithesis of force. Large standing armies sometimes run away with popular institutions.

Secondly, democratic government, in the strict sense of the term, is incompatible with extremes of wealth and poverty.

Absence of poverty.

It does not postulate absolute equality of income. But it does pre-suppose that none should be so poor as to fall easily under the control of others and that none should be so rich as easily to lord it over others. In any case, so long as

poverty exists, democratic government cannot have a smooth run. Poverty often throws such a heavy burden of toil and worry on its victims as to leave them neither the time nor the inclination to cultivate the mind and participate in politics. The economic minimum which was earlier seen to be indispensable to truly civic life is also one of the basic conditions of democratic government.

Thirdly, democratic government demands a high average of general education. Political questions, always difficult to grasp, are now doubly difficult to understand. They have become vast and complex because specialisation has gone far in modern life and because the range of economic enterprise, diplomacy and cultural influences has become world-wide. Experts who devote their lives to the study of these problems differ among themselves. The layman often finds himself at sea in regard to public questions. The average person cannot, indeed, be expected to form an opinion on all the details of political and economic questions. Democratic government, however, does expect of him that he should be able to vote intelligently on the major issues of policy and judge, more or less fairly, the merits of candidates who seek his support. This requires universal primary or secondary education and wide diffusion of higher education. It also requires a supply of accurate news, that is to say, an honest and well-informed press. It is only on solid foundations of education that democratic government can rest secure.

Fourthly, democratic government requires a habit of working together, for otherwise Government would suffer in efficiency and stability. The people should be able to distinguish essentials from non-essentials, sink minor differences, to compromise on all details, and to trust one another. No differences of

Intelligence.

Co-operation.

religion and culture, much less of class and wealth, should be allowed to hamper general co-operation. Toleration should be the rule of social life.

There are also some other moral qualities which democratic government requires. It opens to all the doors of influence and power. It imposes the responsibility of voting on all adults, of repre-

Integrity.

sentatives on thousands who become members of local boards and legislatures and of administration on thousands of others. This system of widespread responsibility depends for its success on a high standard not only of ability but also of integrity. Voters, councillors, legislators, officials—all should be above purchase, above favouritism, above all sordid temptations and should perform their functions conscientiously. Now, it is not possible to have a high standard of honesty in politics and administration when the standards in other walks of life are low. No such compartmentalism is practicable. A high standard all along the line is necessary before incorruptibility can be guaranteed in politics.

Not the least of the requirements of democratic government is popular longing for self-government. If the people are politically apathetic, if they do not love freedom, they will either fail to acquire or fail to retain political

Longing for self-government.

power. It will slip naturally into the hands of those who want it. There is a deep truth in Goethe's saying that liberty has to be conquered afresh every hour. People have to be alert, wide awake and ready to exercise the rights and responsibilities of self-government. If there is no such devotion to self-government, politics may be dominated by those who have something to gain for themselves. The quality called

Public spirit.

public spirit is of the very foundations of democracy.



Hence, the complete success of democratic government depends on peace, a high standard of life among the masses, a high level of mass-education and wide diffusion of advanced education, habits of co-operation and tolerance, moral integrity, a passion for self-government and the spirit of social service. If the requisite qualities and conditions are absolutely lacking, there are no prospects for democracy. But, as a matter of fact, they are not totally absent anywhere. It is equally important to note that the qualities in question can be fostered into strength and the conditions mentioned above brought about. The resources which are now at the command of man can be used to abolish poverty and to universalise education in a much shorter span of time than the earlier ages could have dreamt of. A moral effort is certainly necessary to usher in the reign of peace and tolerance but it will be immensely assisted by the progress of enlightenment and economic welfare. As the economic, intellectual and moral standards rise, the chances of democracy improve.

It is, however, necessary to guard against one hasty inference. It does not at all follow from the previous reasoning that the democratisation of political institutions should be postponed until every one has become honest, educated, and public-spirited and peace and tolerance reign over the earth. There are three reasons for advancing along democratic lines even before the environment has become perfect. In the first place, the process of democratisation often serves to further the conditions that are necessary for full-fledged democracy. It constitutes an education by itself and generates political discussion of an instructive character. It awakens public spirit and brings home to all the imperative need of high standards of integrity. It makes the people

rub shoulders together at polling-booths, meetings and in associations and widens the areas of common life and co-operation. It enables people to press for educational and economic advance. It sets new currents of thought and action in motion and enriches the content of social life. Such, in fact, is the conclusion which emerges from the history of Western Europe and the United States during the last hundred and fifty years.

Secondly, democratic government, in spite of unfavourable conditions, is sometimes better than monarchic or aristocratic government. It is difficult to secure a succession of monarchs or dictators who would comprehend all the problems of popular welfare and work out appropriate policies. Even if they do so, they would not promote that self-respect which comes from the exercise of political responsibilities. As a matter of fact, monarchy is as much exposed to rings of sycophants and cliques of interested groups as democracy is exposed to demagogues and narrow-minded parties. Aristocracies are in a worse plight. Their narrowness is a perennial source of jealousies and discords. Nothing is easier for them than to disregard the welfare of those outside the charmed circle.

Thirdly, democracy has a way of correcting its errors which is not open to alternative forms of government. In case of gross abuses, public opinion often asserts itself and sets matters right. Under democracy, governments can be changed much more easily than under monarchy or aristocracy. What the latter would regard a revolution is an ordinary incident in a democratic regime.

The sound conclusion, then, is that a simultaneous effort be made to democratise government and to improve the

economic and educational condition of the masses. It is also desirable to impart specifically political education to the people. This is the proper function of political clubs or associations. It is for them to organise the study and discussion of political questions and suggest lines of policy. They ought to institute Research Departments to investigate social and economic conditions, to collect facts and to draw inferences from them in a scientific manner. The conclusions can be popularised to form the basis of public opinion. This is political education in the true sense of the term. So far the task of political education has been performed in many countries, though in a somewhat perfunctory and emotional manner, by those formal or informal associations which are called Parties.

A party can be founded on a single principle but usually it seeks a broader basis and strikes a balance between several principles. One of the bases has been differences of race, real or fancied, among the inhabitants of a state. These differences are sometimes allied to those of religion and language but in other cases the latter, whether jointly or singly, lie at the base of distinct parties among members of the same race. Class or caste is another factor in the emergence of parties, while differences of culture have also a share. A very important line of cleavage is divergent economic interests. Those who feel, rightly or wrongly, that their economic interests are the same and that they are different from those of others, sometimes band themselves together to advocate their own programme, and to acquire as much political power as possible. Common grievances and aspirations form another bond of union for political action and therefore constitute one of the bases of parties. They are often correlated to economic

and cultural interests. Differences of temperament furnish another line or series of lines of political division. Some people are, by temperament, cautious, while others are adventurous. The former delight to entrench themselves securely behind the *status quo*; the latter long to try new experiments in organisation.

"That little boy and every gal  
That's born into the world alive,  
Is either a little Liberal,  
Or else a little Conservative".<sup>1</sup>

There are, of course, different degrees of conservatism and radicalism. Hence, more than two parties can arise on the basis of temperamental differences alone. Temperament combines with purely intellectual operations in producing honest differences of conviction. These can serve as excellent bases of party, provided the convictions relate to general, not merely sectional, welfare.

Sometimes parties arise because some politicians are eager for office and manage to attach some others to their interests. Sheer personal influence is sometimes responsible for the formation of a party. Lastly, the momentum of tradition is a factor in the sustenance of parties. Party organisations often continue to exist and to function long after the problems which gave rise to them have been settled and have passed into oblivion. The funds, interests and ambitions which have in the meanwhile clustered round the party keep it alive.

There is nothing absolutely fixed or permanent about the creed, the policy or the membership of a party. All of them are liable to change under the pressure of the changing environment, new ideas and sometimes also personal in-

The character of  
parties.

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<sup>1</sup> Gilbert and Sullivan's opera, "*Iolanthe*", Act II.

fluence. There are some parties which speak openly for a particular section of the community, while others profess to advocate the true interests of the whole community. Like some other associations, parties also sometimes acquire international affiliations. Again, there are sometimes parties within parties. At any given moment, a party usually comprises a small band of enthusiasts and a large number of more or less lukewarm adherents. Then there is the large mass of indifferent people who do not belong to any party but who sympathise with one or more of them at different times.

In times of election or excitement, the party leaders and enthusiasts try to rally the indifferent mass to their banner. When passions run high, parties usually employ every device to attract voters. It is thus dangerous to found parties on the bases of racial, religious, cultural, or caste differences. That is calculated to widen the breaches in society, to befog political issues with irrelevancies, to overwhelm reason with blind passion and to hamper general co-operation. There is also a danger lurking in parties based on fundamental divergence of economic interest. They may devote themselves so exclusively to the interests of groups as to ignore the general interest. Politically, the soundest parties are those which are based on differences of temperament and conviction but which relate their objects and programmes to the general welfare.

Parties are instruments of political action as well as of political education. They rouse public opinion and keep up the interest in public questions. They sift issues for presentation to the electorate and select candidates for the same purpose. Under the parliamentary system, parties assist the formation of governments and also supply organised oppo-

The functions of parties.

sition for criticising those in office. They take up special projects of social reform and agitate for their adoption. A little reflection will show that these functions are best performed when parties steer clear of race, caste and creed and when they are not too many in number. A multitude of parties would confuse the electorate, make governments instable and produce a crop of intrigues for the formation and dissolution of coalitions. It is, therefore, desirable to stress those qualities of practical compromise which keep down the number of parties. Under representative government, parties spread their tentacles far and wide and perform functions of the highest importance so that they sometimes appear to resemble parallel governments. Along with other political clubs, they constitute a series of political associations which assist and sometimes distract the operations of the supreme political association called the state.

Like other political associations, parties should institute research departments to make sure of facts and figures on which to base their programmes. The truly civic role of political associations and parties is to assist the performance of the duties which fall to the state. They are to supply constructive criticism as well as constructive co-operation in the larger interests of the whole community. Under democratic government they help to organise the will of the people, to interpret it in terms of concrete proposals and to translate it into action.

But whatever the degree of self-government, there are some duties which every state, or what comes in this context

The scope of state-activity. to the same thing, every government is morally bound to perform. The precise character of the duties of the state or government varies with the times. What might have been regarded as proper and adequate a century or even half a

century ago is not necessarily so to-day. The principle which should guide governments is indeed the same, viz., the provision of conditions favourable to the self-realisation of all. But the application of this principle is affected by changes in the environment. No government can compel a person to be happy or to realise his best possibilities. It is a contradiction in terms. Happiness or self-realisation is a function partly of those inner feelings which no external agency can touch. It depends on, and presupposes, liberty rather than compulsion. What government can do is so to regulate external conditions and so to provide facilities as to favour the attainment of the good and happy life by all people. This is the civic role of the state.

The state must necessarily confine itself to external conditions of life. For the rest there are no *a priori* limits to its action. It should do all that it can to further the conditions of good life. It fails in its duty if it takes shelter behind the doctrine of *laissez faire* and does not exert all its power and utilise all its resources to promote popular welfare. It was argued by some philosophers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that extensive state-activity would kill initiative, spontaneity and liberty in the people. Experience, however, has shown that these are damaged and restricted more by poverty, ignorance, disease and other such obstacles than by state laws and measures designed to remove them. Besides, it is possible to associate the people, through democratisation, with the tasks of government so that state action and popular action largely become synonymous. The state is morally bound to remove the hinderances to good life. That is in itself a vast programme of action. But the state is to go still further and adopt a positive programme of welfare. This is specially true of those social tasks which are best per-

Principles of State-  
action.

formed on a large scale and which the state is obviously best fitted to undertake.

The foregoing discussion has shown that at one time or other the state has performed every conceivable function in some country or other. It is necessary to consider what functions it can best

Education. undertake under modern conditions of life. The first place must be assigned to education. We have already seen that education is the foundation of good life and that it ought to be universal. Under modern conditions of life it is not a luxury for the few but an absolute necessity for all. Now education in all its branches—primary, secondary, higher, technical and adult education—including provision for libraries, museums, research institutes etc., is such a gigantic task that it cannot be left to private enterprise. The state must plan it on an adequate scale, enlist the co-operation of private agencies and local boards, supply the necessary funds, and try continuously to improve the system. We have already seen that in modern times every state should stand forth as the educational state.

The second great function or rather series of functions which the state has to undertake concerns the Economic

The Economic Minimum which, along with education, Minimum. forms the foundation of civic life. Poverty has to be banished from every land and the standard of life of the masses to be raised as high as possible. It is therefore necessary to increase the wealth of the community, to make every able-bodied man work and to let every one have his fair share of the social dividend. All this requires not merely an organisation of the internal economy of a state but, under modern conditions, a good deal of international co-operation. It is obvious that the great project of universal melioration cannot be left to the play



of unrestricted private competition. It has to be taken over by the state and pushed through with all its power and resources. Here is implied a large measure of social control of economic activities.

It may be repeated here that the state has always exercised a certain measure of control over property. It has regulated land-tenure, inheritance, monopolies, etc., and appropriated part of social wealth through taxes. Taxation has also been frequently used to encourage or discourage various imports and exports and the corresponding industries of a country. In modern times the regulation of economic life has gone much further. The Industrial Revolution has so increased the range of operations and complicated the relations of employers, managers, workers, and consumers that the state has had to assume many new functions. A large number of states have passed Factory Acts, prohibiting the employment of women and children in certain industries and at certain times, regulating the conditions of work, and fixing the hours of work of all. Other acts have been passed to prescribe minimum wages, old age pensions, insurance against sickness, accident, and unemployment. Many states have also legislated on functional associations like Trade Unions, and on conciliation and arbitration in industrial disputes. Most states have also gone further and undertaken directly to perform some services of an economic character. They run Post, Telegraph and Telephone Offices, Railways and Shipping. Every state controls currency and exchange. In times of War, or other emergencies, states assume control of the whole of economic life and ration food, milk, sugar, etc. Local boards, which are a part of the machinery of state, run tram-cars and supply water, milk, gas, electricity etc., to their citizens at fixed rates. They lay out gardens

Economic Regulation.

and recreation grounds and build houses and settlements, baths, swimming tanks etc. Many states have signed international conventions on Post, copyright, hours of work, etc.

It will thus appear that the state already exercises a great deal of control over economic life. The civic ideal demands

that this control should be systematised  
 Production and and informed by a large vision so as to  
 Distribution. raise every one clean above want.

Briefly, the state has to organise agricultural improvement by executing large-scale irrigation works like canals, dams, tanks, anicuts, and tube-wells; by establishing depots of better seed, manures and implements, and teaching and popularising their use. It has to improve the systems of land-tenure and guarantee security and protection to farmers. It should encourage co-operative purchase, credit and marketing. These measures would result in a large increase of wealth and a prosperous peasantry. Next, the state should survey the industrial resources of the country, estimate their prospects of development and encourage the establishment of factories at suitable points. It should gather economic information from all quarters of the world and place it, in a systematised form, before the public. It should organise co-operation and co-ordination among industrialists so as to eliminate waste, needless competition and overlapping. It should organise technical education and research. It should explore the possibilities of cottage industries and of carrying electric power to the country-side to set them on a practical basis. It would thus be possible to turn out an adequate quantity of goods with the minimum labour. In order to ensure a fair distribution of the wealth produced through agriculture and industry, it ought to be enacted that the peasant and the labourer alike should have enough for a decent standard of comfort and also ample

leisure for recreation and mental cultivation. International agreements should also be concluded to limit the hours of work in all countries and to prevent real wages from falling below a given standard. This would obviate the possibility of the businessmen of one nation undercutting those of another in economic competition and thus forcing down the scale of wages everywhere. It may be pointed out that the higher incomes of peasants and labourers would mean a great deal of fresh expenditure and thus furnish an incomparable stimulus to industry, commerce and banking. This whole economic policy implies a large measure of state control of the land and of the industrial structure. But that is an inseparable part of the duty of the state to guarantee the economic minimum to all its members by abolishing poverty and raising the general standard of life.

Economic development of the kind envisaged here depends partly on swift and efficient means of transport—

Transport. roads, railways, shipping, aeroplanes, post, telegraph, telephone and radio. Some of

these, as we have already seen, are also necessary to bring the village within the full orbit of citizenship. They possess great educational potentialities and add immensely to the conveniences of life. The task of initiating and maintaining excellent means of transport and communication is so huge that for the most part it has to be performed directly by the state and, for the rest, controlled by it. Provision of transport and communication then, may be regarded as the third great duty of the state.

Another colossal task which falls to the state is the promotion of public health. Longevity and health have gone up during the last hundred years in many

Public Health. countries such as the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Norway and Sweden. But the standards

are still very low in other lands such as India and China. It is the duty of the community organised as the state to undertake a campaign of public health. Education, a decent standard of life and facilities of transport will be powerful aids in such a campaign. The state, in co-operation with other agencies, can do a great deal to prevent the outbreak of epidemics, both in villages and in towns. It is necessary, to drain the marshes, exterminate some pests and parasites, dispose of the sewage in a scientific manner, provide pure water, inspect the markets of food-stuffs, and promote cleanliness all round. It is also necessary to diffuse a knowledge of the laws of health, for prevention is better than cure. But as some people are sure to fall ill, the state and private agencies should establish dispensaries, hospitals, nursing homes and asylums. Here the active co-operation of all citizens is eminently desirable, indeed, indispensable. But it is for the state to plan and organise the resources of the community for the promotion of public health.

To universalise education and economic welfare is to take a long step towards the regime of justice. It is also the duty of the state to adopt other measures  
 Order and Justice. to maintain social justice. It should restrain encroachment on the citizen's rights to freedom of religion, culture, security, association, public meeting etc., subject to qualifications which have already been discussed. Accordingly, the state has to maintain a police force to maintain order, to prevent and detect crime. It has to maintain courts of law to try civil suits and criminal cases and make the necessary restitutions and inflict appropriate sentences.

Punishment represents the reaction of the social organism to anti-social conduct. There is thus an element of retribution in it. But it also serves other  
 Punishment. purposes. It is deterrent, that is to say,

the example or prospect of punishment deters many from committing crimes. It can also be made to serve the purpose of reforming delinquents—specially young people and those who are victims of adverse circumstances. A good deal of crime is due directly or indirectly to bad upbringing, to poverty, to defective social and economic arrangements. It is therefore unfair to make punishment wholly retributive or deterrent. It should also be motivated by considerations of the good of the criminal. He should be instructed into better ways of life and should be taught some handicraft to enable him to earn an honest living. No effort should be spared to wean children from criminal behaviour. Hence, the state should maintain not only jails but also reformatories. Juvenile overseers should be appointed to keep an eye on youngsters who might have been let off with a warning or who might have completed their sentences. The state should also encourage organisations like Discharged Prisoners' Aid Societies to set ex-convicts on the right path again.

Social justice is not a static conception. It does not consist merely in the maintenance of order and administration of justice in courts of law. It also insists that all social arrangements be brought into conformity with the principle of equal opportunity to all. It follows that society grows into justice. Often there arise movements for removing obstacles to justice and for mitigating inequalities. Broadly, these may be termed movements of social reform. Whenever such movements arise, it is the duty of the state to meet them half-way. Appropriate legislation can be passed whenever public opinion declares itself unmistakably for reform. It depends on circumstances whether the government should assume the leadership in social reform. But in no case should it set its face against movements of reform. In conformity with this

general rule the state should legislate on marriage, divorce, property rights of women, inheritance, position of hitherto submerged classes etc. In the category of social reform may be included measures for restricting or regulating the sale and consumption of alcoholic drinks, opium etc. Abuses of this kind may be so widespread and entail such serious consequences as to render it incumbent on the state to mitigate them through legislation. Such action cannot rightly be regarded as an infringement of liberty. Excessive drinking is usually so debilitating that it chokes the fountains of energy and, therefore, of liberty. Legislation in favour of temperance is really tantamount to maintenance of the conditions of liberty.

Last but not least, a state has to fulfil certain duties in relation to other states. These have now become doubly important because modern transport and communication have brought all the countries together. What happens in one country profoundly affects the well-being of others. A bumper crop here, a tariff there, long hours of work, or low wages in a third country, have repercussions far and wide. It is the duty of every state to co-operate with others in maintaining conditions favourable to a high standard of living all over the world. Every nation should live at peace with others, respecting their rights and treating them on a footing of justice and equality. War and injustice should be eliminated from the dealings of nations with one another. When differences arise, states should, instead of resorting to war, submit them to International Courts of Justice or to arbitration. But if a state insists on invading another, it is the duty of other states to defeat this aggression. The invader should be treated as an outlaw and commercial and financial relations with it be cut off. In the last resort, war

International  
Affairs.

may be declared by the nations on the aggressor.

All this pre-supposes an organisation more effective than the League of Nations is at present. So long as this interna-

Defence.                      tional concert, based on justice and co-operation, does not materialise, it is the manifest duty of the state to organise defence. It has to maintain a well-equipped army, navy and air force. Defence has always been regarded as one of the primary duties of the state. But the machinery proper for defence has often been used for aggression, for aggrandizement at the expense of others and for trampling on the rights of others. Indeed, it is this risk which constitutes the case for defence on the other side. Public opinion, accordingly, should reprobate all aggression, from whatever quarter it may come.

Mass education, economic welfare, transport, communications, public health, social reform, order, security, justice, international co-operation, defence—  
The Co-operation of Citizens.                      these are the main items in an adequate programme of state action in modern

times. It is easy to enumerate additional duties of a minor character. But the principal ones in themselves constitute a task of colossal dimensions. Its performance requires thinking on a large scale, systematic development of resources, careful planning and formulation of policy, organisation in various spheres of social life. It is clear that success here depends on the cordial and constant co-operation of citizens. The latter should develop their own powers to the utmost for fruitful contribution to social welfare. They should be able to contribute their instructed judgment to the tasks of government. They should co-operate energetically in spreading education, in promoting justice and economic welfare, and in other matters. The merit of democratic government is that it enables the citizen to identify himself

readily with the standpoint of the state and to contribute his mite to its operations. But a centralised state, however democratic, will find great difficulties in enlisting popular co-operation in day to day operations and in adapting them to local requirements. It is, therefore, necessary to decentralize authority and to confer large powers of administration on local boards. Hence, it is now necessary to turn to the question of Local self-government.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

It is natural for every one to feel an attachment to the village or the town in which he resides. His thoughts and activities

may bring him into live contact with other parts of the country and the world. Loyalty to the neighbourhood.

He may cultivate his mind, his sympathies and various interests so as to realise that he is a citizen of the world. But that does not usually cool his loyalty to the locality in which he lives his life for the most part. Nor is it at all desirable that he should cease to feel an interest in the affairs of the immediate neighbourhood. He should, indeed, integrate them with his general scheme of things so as not to injure the wider concerns of which they are a part. But he ought to retain his interest in them and contribute his judgment and energy to their management. After the family, the neighbourhood serves best to nurse the sympathies, to call forth altruism, in short, to lift the individual beyond himself.

This is the moral foundation of local self-government. There are several administrative reasons why localities should

enjoy a large measure of autonomy. In the first place, the circumstances of villages, towns or districts differ and therefore Local requirements.

demand differential treatment. This is best supplied through local agencies for these know the localities best. They are bound to carry out the policy framed by the legislature above. But the execution of that policy, whether in educa-

tion, sanitation or public works, requires bye-laws and measures in accordance with local peculiarities. It is here {that local boards can be granted powers enough to attract ability and public spirit in the service of their administration. Local self-government can thus be used to improve the quality of government and fill up gaps in the knowledge which is requisite to the tasks of government.

Secondly, such devolution would mean relief to the central legislature and executive. Under present-day conditions the government are called upon to legislate on so many subjects and to run so many departments that they are overwhelmed with work. If they were required to go into all the details of local affairs they would fail miserably. Under the burden of multitudinous local items, any legislature would break down and, in any case, be compelled to dispose of its larger issues in a hasty, perfunctory and inefficient manner. Local self-government is thus the safety-valve of central government. It assists in maintaining the proper balance of powers and functions. Local boards can take over primary education, public health, minor public works etc., and, to that extent, relieve the central government.

Thirdly, local boards are adapted pre-eminently to the performance of certain functions which are, usually summed up as Municipal Trading. They can undertake to run tramcars. They can establish water-works and power-stations and supply pure water and good light to all the citizens. They can run dairies and arrange a steady supply of pure milk. They can establish markets, license conveyances, improve the towns or villages and look after the roads, ferries etc., within their jurisdiction. In this manner, local

boards can render great services to the people and also make profits for expenditure on education, sanitation etc. Apart from profitable enterprises, local authorities can establish libraries, museums, picture-galleries, gymnasiums, recreation clubs, parks and gardens etc., in suitable places and make appropriate regulations for their use. It is clear that functions of this character cannot be managed efficiently from the headquarters of the national or provincial government.

Last but not least, local self-government is a great instrument of political education. A village or town offers

that familiar environment which, as Aristotle said, is the best unit of democratic government. It is the training ground for responsible government on a wider scale. In the sphere of local self-government a large number of people can learn how organisation is effected, what difficulties arise in administration, how necessary are knowledge, diligence and integrity to administration. Through local self-government they learn how to co-operate among themselves, how to distinguish essentials from non-essentials and how to compromise on practical matters. Above all, local self-government is best calculated to rouse and sustain the citizen's interest in common affairs. In the case of a vast electorate, the individual sometimes feels as if he were lost in the multitude. In a village or town, he is likely to feel that he is of some consequence. He can understand the affairs of the neighbourhood with a thoroughness which cannot be expected of all in the case of national affairs. He can know the people of the neighbourhood much better than those of the whole country. Accordingly, he can, in normal times, identify himself with the interests of the locality much more readily than with national affairs. Once he has learnt these lessons in the primary sphere of civic life, he can rise to higher levels and

discharge the duties of citizenship all round with greater efficiency. Local institutions are the school of public life.

In an agricultural country, the village is the natural starting-point of self-government. In fact, no scheme of

The village. local autonomy can be sound in its foundations or complete in its structure,

unless it vests some power in the general body of villagers. Every village or a union of small neighbouring villages forms the unit of self-government. Here it is feasible to have direct democracy. All the adults, men and women alike, in the village or the union, should be entitled to attend the general

The General Assembly. assembly, vote on the matters placed before them and to participate in the election of committees and officials. All

should possess equal rights of voting, irrespective of caste, creed or vocation, subject to the usual disqualifications of lunacy, idiocy, electoral corruption and conviction for moral turpitude. The assembly should decide any general questions and should elect Committees for managing education, public works, public health, etc., and also a General Committee to co-ordinate the activities of the others and to impart the necessary centrality to the administration. The chairmen or secretaries of the committees may be elected by the Assembly or by the Committees themselves. No rigid scheme of organisation can be prescribed for all areas. The point is that the Assembly should be a perfectly democratic one. If limitations are imposed on the basis of sex, caste, creed or occupation, the harmony of village life would be gravely imperilled by jealousies, injustices and grievances. The assembly would be deprived of large sources of knowledge, experience and judgment. Its decisions would not readily command the loyalty of those excluded from its membership.

On the other hand, an Assembly is not suited for detailed administration. This should, accordingly, be entrusted to committees and officials. A committee

Committees. should be associated with the village school and so, too, with other institutions. A large number of persons would thus acquire administrative experience at first hand and be better qualified to judge of wider public questions.

It is also desirable to arrange for the adjudication of petty disputes within the village. There are obvious risks

Adjudication. in throwing open the offices of judges to popular election. It would affect their independence and expose them to just or unjust suspicions. A panel of village judges may be nominated by the Chairman of the General Committee, by some corresponding official or by the district authorities for a fixed period, say, two or three years.

For countries predominantly agricultural like India, few things can be so important as the building up of a happy, prosperous and cultured village life. All

Rebuilding of Village Life through history, the country-side has been dominated in an undue measure by the

town. Thanks to the new means of transport and communication and the new prospects of agricultural improvement, the village has at last a chance of winning a higher place in the organised life of the community. Here it is important to enlist the co-operation of the villagers themselves through institutions of self-government. Apart from the organs of territorial self-government, it is possible to establish co-operative societies of villagers for the purchase or sale and, to a certain extent, also the use, of agricultural implements and machinery. Co-operative marketing and co-operative credit would rid the villager of a good deal of worry,

enhance his real income and train him to habits of co-operation.

The city holds out wider opportunities of self-government but it also presents an initial difficulty. Usually, it

The city and its problems. evokes some loyalty and attachment but it may be too big for the citizens to know

one another. Indeed, next-door neighbours in cities may remain utter strangers to one another all their lives. The enormous size of cities like London and New York, or even Calcutta and Bombay, militates against the growth of such an intimate corporate feeling as arises naturally in the case of a village. Attempts to divide modern cities into wards to serve as units of self-government have met with little success. The big city remains one of the problems of civilization. It calls for quick and safe transport. It requires open spaces, and parks to keep itself healthy. It requires a plentiful supply of pure water for drinking and washing, and a wholesome system of disposing of the sewage. Then there is the housing problem. There is often a dearth of building land or at least of houses. Accordingly, a large number of poor people are driven into 'slums'—dirty, congested quarters, with narrow lanes and miserable tenements and hovels. Many families live in single rooms. Indeed, as many as twenty or thirty persons have been known to live in a single room! It is easy to imagine how disastrous such living is to health, to nerves and to the morale. The shortage of houses means such heavy rents that numerous middle class people have also to content themselves with small apartments, beyond the reach of the sun or the breeze. This does not usually exert a soothing influence on family life. Then there are many who are compelled by the shortage or heavy rents of houses to keep their families for the most part in

their ancestral village homes. Another source of discomfort is the contrast between flaunting wealth and grinding poverty. The city presents such opportunities of spending and waste that many wealthy persons live a life of glaring and ostentatious luxury. The poor man who compares his lot with theirs thinks himself to be even poorer than he is and actually becomes more miserable than he need be. All this is aggravated by another feature of city life—its stir and bustle. The vast crowds, rattling trams, cars, and other conveyances rushing at top speed, long hours of work, lack of contact with natural scenery—all these shatter the nerves. The tired, jaded men take to drink, to dice, to the cheap and low cinema, or to other forms of dissipation to sooth their nerves or to drown their worries. Hence arise grave problems in temperance, recreation and morals.

So serious are the problems of the city that some good people have longed to see all the big towns wiped off. It

may be admitted at once that the present  
The importance of the city. huge accumulations of population can be

reduced in size. Electric power can now be conducted into the country and factories need not be concentrated on a single spot. Again, the people can avail themselves of the modern facilities of transport and spend only working hours in the cities. If the quality of rural life were improved, it would not lose in such large numbers to the cities as at present. The big city can thus be somewhat reduced in size but there is no prospect of its disappearance. Nor, indeed, is it desirable that it should vanish. The city is the centre of commerce and banking. It is the centre of education, culture and refinement. It facilitates the clash of mind with mind which generates new doctrines and programmes. A large population can easily contribute a sufficiency of ideas, energy and money for the main-

tenance of all the amenities of life. For instance, water-works, drainage, macadamized roads, tramcars etc., are paying propositions only if they serve a large clientele. It is significant that the city promptly assimilates the elements it receives. The immigrant from the village finds himself rapidly acclimatised to the environment of urban life. But the town-dweller generally finds it impossible to live a country life. The improvement of the latter would mitigate but would not remove this disparity. Cities are bound to remain, and ought to remain, a prominent feature of social life. It is necessary to checkmate their evils, to reform and re-organise their life and to make them radiating centres of light and happiness.

In this task all the citizens should co-operate. Here is one of the imperative reasons for municipal self-government.

Objectives of Municipal self-government.

There is so much to be done for the life of a town, so many adjustments to be made, so many details to be settled and above all, such a large amount of popular co-operation to be enlisted that the central or provincial government cannot hope to look after them. It is the duty of the citizens to put forth their best efforts and manage their affairs, subject to national plans and regulations.

One of the primary local concerns is what may be called town-planning. Most of the towns have grown up in a haphazard manner. As a rule, they cannot

Town-planning. be entirely re-built afresh. But their extensions can be carefully planned on scientific principles so as to provide broad thoroughfares, parks, drainage etc. The congested quarters should also be opened up and rebuilt on sound sanitary principles. Unless this work is entrusted to a separate Improvement Trust, it falls to the municipal



authorities. Even in the former contingency, the co-operation of the Municipality is essential.

Closely allied to Town-planning is the provision of a sufficiency of houses. It is up to every municipal board to survey the housing accommodation

Housing. within its jurisdiction and estimate the requirements on the basis of a decent life for all citizens. A sufficient number of house-plots should be made available to citizens. Besides, municipal boards can themselves build model-houses and put them on rent.

The bigger a town the more urgent is the problem of sanitation. Every municipal board has to establish a proper

Sanitation. system for the disposal of sewage, for drainage, for keeping the streets and open spaces as neat and clean as possible. All citizens should be under a legal obligation to keep their premises clean and to refrain from dirtying the vicinity. Every Municipality should see to it that citizens are supplied with an adequate quantity of pure water. It is also necessary to supervise the markets and prevent and punish adulteration of food-stuffs, sale of rotten meat, vegetables, etc., and enforce measures against sweets, milk and other articles being infected with disease-carrying germs by mosquitoes and flies.

Every effort should be made to acquaint the citizens with the rules of health through educational institutions, newspapers, lectures and proclamations. To

Public Health. repeat what has already been said, prevention is better than cure. Besides, it is desirable to establish dispensaries, hospitals, clinics and maternity and nursing homes. Their fees and charges should be fixed low enough to place their benefits within reach of the poorest.

Every municipality should maintain an efficient system

of public works, within its jurisdiction. The roads, bridges  
and culverts should be kept in proper  
Public Works. order.

Then there is the most important of all functions—  
education. Every boy and every girl in a municipal as in  
Education. a rural area should receive primary  
education compulsorily and free of all  
charge. Nor should adult education be neglected. In fact,  
it deserves special attention in every country in which pri-  
mary education has been neglected in the past and which  
contains a large illiterate adult population. Evening schools  
for adults may, during a period of transition, be as important  
for progress as juvenile schools. Under all circumstances  
they are necessary as continuation schools. They would  
prevent the benefits of primary education from being sub-  
merged by the humdrum life of the world. They would  
enable the young men to preserve their intellectual tastes and  
habits and keep the windows of their minds open to fresh  
ideas and influences. As already pointed out, every system  
of education must include the organisation of libraries, and  
museums. A municipality can attach borrowing or travell-  
ing libraries to schools in the various wards and throw open  
their use to the local residents on payment of a nominal fee.  
Similarly, school children should be taken round museums  
which, indeed, can be made to supplement schools. It is  
open to Municipal Boards—indeed, in large towns it is their  
duty—to maintain secondary schools and technical schools.  
Every municipal school should have an advisory committee,  
consisting partly of representatives of parents or guardians,  
attached to it. Such a committee could not only throw out  
valuable suggestions for improving the life of the school but  
would also enlist the active interest of a good many citizens  
in the welfare of schools.

There are municipal corporations in western countries which run cinemas and theatres in order to guarantee cheap and wholesome entertainment to citizens and, incidentally to reap some revenue for themselves. Experience has shown that the film, the stage and the music-hall are two-edged swords. They can serve as agencies of education, moral exhilaration and genuine recreation. They can also degenerate into agencies of sheer dissipation and pander to low and vulgar tastes. They call for some supervision on the part of the state. But the most effective remedy for bad music, bad films or bad drama is to provide healthy substitutes on cheap rates. A well-organised municipal theatre can popularise Kalidas, Bhavabhuti, Shakespeare, Bernard Shaw, and other great dramatists. Similarly, a well-conducted music-hall can initiate the public into an appreciation of the great tunes and masterpieces of music cultivated in India as well as in other countries. In like manner, the film can project the grandeurs of natural scenery, objective views of life in various countries and stories with real art or real lessons. Municipal Boards are thus amply justified in turning their attention to houses of entertainment.

Similarly, municipal boards should maintain public parks and recreation grounds. Besides, they can engage in various enterprises which would serve the public interest and at the same time increase the income of the corporations. For instance, municipal boards can organise the supply of electricity or gas, milk, butter, etc., and run tramcars and steamboats on any rivers or lakes.

In addition to towns, villages or unions of villages, there is a third area of local self-government, the rural district.

Here the problem is different from the one in a single compact locality. The district comprises a large area with habitations scattered far and wide. It does not readily win the affection and devotion of the inhabitants. It does not evoke the spontaneous loyalty of which villages and towns are often the fortunate recipients. Yet the district is indispensable as an administrative unit. There are many matters which the village or union is too small, and the province is too large, to look after in detail. Local requirements must be consulted in schemes of police, education, sanitation, public works, irrigation, agricultural improvement, marketing, etc. The district is best adapted to serve as an administrative unit for these purposes. It is also desirable to enlist the co-operation of the public in the performance of these services for the district. Hence, the need of a large measure of self-government for the district.

*Mutatis mutandis* the District Boards are expected to perform for the district functions which have already been discussed in connection with self-governing villages and towns. Municipalities lie outside their purview but they naturally stand in close juxtaposition with the *punchayats* of villages or unions of villages. The district board should see to it that the district is provided with sufficient roads and paths, that they are kept in proper order and that there are adequate watering places for travellers. They should pay special heed to the organisation of fairs and exhibitions in order to popularise improved methods of cultivation, manuring, irrigation, harvesting etc. They should actively encourage the formation of co-operative societies for agriculture, credit and marketing. The measures for hygiene and sanitation applicable to towns hold good for districts as

well. Every district board should encourage the planning of villages, that is to say, it should inculcate the desirability of laying out broad and straight streets, of erecting well-ventilated houses, of keeping them clean, of depositing the refuse at a distance from the habitation, and of keeping the tanks as clean as possible. It should take steps to drain out the marshes and systematise the drainage of the district on scientific lines, if necessary, in co-operation with the neighbouring districts. Above all, the district boards should provide free and compulsory primary education for all children, continued education for adults and technical instruction, specially for the sake of improved agriculture and handicrafts.

The organisation of local boards is bound to vary from place to place according to the numerical strength, the education of the people and the functions of the boards themselves. Only a few broad features need be touched on.

The Organisation  
of Local Boards.

The governing body should be elected on the basis of adult franchise, through wards in cities and suitable constituencies in districts. It should elect its own chairman and should settle policies and important questions. The detailed administration of the various departments is best delegated to Committees with defined powers. Officials ought to be recruited, so far as practicable, through competitive examinations. It is desirable to associate Advisory Committees of non-officials with the responsible officials and committees of the various departments.

If local boards are to perform their duties efficiently, they must have large funds at their disposal. There are several sources of income open to them.

Local Finance.

In the first place, they can engage in profitable enterprises such as those which have been discussed

above. They are calculated to yield a considerable income. Secondly, boards can levy a number of cesses or rates such as terminal tax, octroi, tax on circumstances and property, tax on ferries and bridges. Licenses for conveyances—lorries, cars, horse-conveyances, bicycles, boats—can yield something. House, water and scavenging taxes form another branch of revenue. Fees in secondary schools, hospitals, museums etc., should reach a large figure. For the rest, local boards are entitled to subventions from the Government for various purposes, particularly for education. Subject to Government sanction, local boards, specially those of large towns and extensive districts, should be empowered to raise loans for productive purposes and for any big educational enterprise.

The relations of the local bodies with the Government call for a delicate adjustment. In the last resort, government

Local bodies and Government. must be responsible for their financial solvency and has to replenish their coffers for day-to-day activities. It is,

therefore, entitled to appoint auditors for their accounts, to review their budgets, to sanction or refuse to sanction extraordinary expenditure and borrowing. Secondly, the Government must coordinate the various activities of the villages, unions, districts and towns so as to integrate them with national plans of education, communications, transport, sanitation and economic amelioration. Legislative enactments should therefore demarcate the spheres of operation of the local boards and lay down the board lines of policy for them.

On the other hand, it will be disastrous to deprive local bodies of all initiative or to destroy their sense of responsibility. Within the sphere and policy prescribed by legislation, the local bodies should be free to serve local needs according to their best judgment. The Government should supply

them with information and suggestions, should arrange conferences of representatives of localities for comparing notes and for discussing common problems. In important matters, the Government may furnish guidance gently and tactfully. But they should, so far as possible, refrain from interference with the routine administration of localities. If things go radically wrong, government must make itself effectively felt and, if the worst comes to the worst, may supersede or suspend the boards. But the general principle is that localities should normally manage their own affairs freely within the limits prescribed by legislation.

The success of local self-government depends more than anything else on the character, public spirit and co-operation of the inhabitants. The

Local bodies and the public. deeper the affection for one's village,

district or town, the greater the chances of disinterested service being rendered to local boards. The more ardent the passion for self-government, the keener the vigilance against encroachments by sinister interests. All self-government demands a high sense of responsibility. It demands that every citizen should try to understand at least the broad principles underlying public questions. He must try to form a correct opinion on the merits of the candidates who seek his suffrage. His judgment should be guided solely by motives of public welfare and should not be influenced by considerations of caste or class, religion or sect, much less by personal advantage. In other words, he ought to contribute his instructed and dispassionate judgment to the furtherance of general welfare. Those elected to serve on local bodies should consistently be above all temptations of personal gain, all sectional interests and cheap popularity. The whole citizen-body should co-operate in the tasks which local self-governing bodies are expected to perform. It is

patent that every one can help in keeping the village or town in a sanitary condition. Most educated persons can assist in adult or continued education and the working of libraries, reading-rooms etc. Those who possess the requisite equipment and leisure can master local problems and enlighten the rest of the community in regard to them. A genuine public opinion can be built up in this manner. If parties arise, it is the interest of the citizen body to see that they are not formed on the bases of caste or religion, or personal rancours and rivalries. They should grow only on the basis of honest differences of opinion in regard to the welfare of the whole community.

There is one danger against which all local institutions have to guard themselves. It is parochialism. The small scale on which local bodies necessarily conduct their operations should not be allowed to blur the vision of national and humanitarian interests. A wider perspective is always helpful in organising public welfare. The citizen-body of every locality should regard itself as part of a wider whole and integrate its welfare therewith. If local activities are inspired by a broad purpose, they will not only be more enlightened but also attract a nobler type of man to their service.

The self-government which has so far been discussed is territorial in its basis. There is, however, another type of self-government which has existed for centuries and which has acquired great importance of late. It is functional self-government. Communities or associations of those following the same vocation have often settled many of their concerns by themselves. Communities of agriculturists, guilds of craftsmen, merchants etc., associations of physicians,



lawyers etc., etc., have often laid down standards for their members, fixed the price of their commodities or services, prescribed the conditions of apprenticeship, etc.<sup>1</sup> Under modern conditions, functional associations cannot be left altogether to themselves. As already pointed out, the social interest involved in the activities of mine-owners and miners, employer's associations and labour unions etc., is too weighty to be neglected.<sup>2</sup> It must be looked after by society as a whole, in practice by the state. The functional groups, then, must conform to national plans and national legislation. But within these limits they should have the liberty to manage their internal affairs. Farmers should have a voice in regulating agricultural activities on co-operative lines. Labourers may be given representation on committees concerned with the management of factories. And so on. They should, similarly, have a hand in maintaining discipline in the workshops. This self-government in industry, far from diminishing, would increase the efficiency of the farm or plant. It would give all concerned an added incentive to effort and make the work pleasanter. It would also prevent many injustices and secure the quick redress of grievances. It would provide a safety-valve for discontent and help to bring about economic peace.

<sup>1</sup> *Supra* Ch. VII.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra* Ch. VIII.

## CHAPTER X

### PUBLIC OPINION

THE state, as a political association, is a very comprehensive entity. It comprises a Central Government as well as local institutions. There are many branches

Branches of Gov- of Government which have not been  
ernment. touched in the preceding pages. For

instance, the Central Government of a unitary state or of a component state of a federation is often divided into provinces. The Provincial Administration exercises executive, judicial and legislative powers within prescribed limits. A province is sometimes divided into Divisions comprising a group of Districts, or directly into Districts. The officers of Divisions and Districts exercise specific powers. The district in its turn is often divided into smaller sub-divisions. Then there are also some units of local self-government other than those discussed above. For instance, Town Areas and Notified Areas in some parts of India stand midway between villages and Municipalities. Until the nineteenth century England had a large number of local elective boards with different functions, members and sources of revenue. Yet another branch of Government has lately begun to grow. It may be called International Government. It is struggling to make itself felt through Treaties, Agreements, Conventions and consultations between states. It has thrown up three organisations—the League of Nations and the International Labour Office, with their head-quarters at Geneva and the

Permanent Court of International Justice located at The Hague.

Political Government, as a whole, is usually divided into three branches—Executive, Legislative and Judicial. Their functions are indicated by their designations and have been more than once adverted to in the preceding chapters.

Departments of Government.

It will be observed that the extension of governmental activity which civic life under modern conditions demands imposes unprecedented responsibilities on all the three branches of Government. The executive specially has to institute a large number of Departments for the furtherance of social welfare. Inevitably there arises a Bureaucracy, consisting of permanent officials of various descriptions, at the headquarters of the National, Provincial and even District Administrations.

But this hierarchy of territorial government, imposing as it is, does not exhaust all the categories of Government.

There is functional Government conducted by churches, vocational associations and other functional bodies.

Functional Government.

Altogether, there is a stupendous amount of social control under present-day conditions of life. It is exercised through a large number of agencies, and is one of the decisive factors in the life of every individual. It raises some problems

Agencies of Control.

of surpassing importance. Firstly, all the agencies of control must be kept up to the truly constructive role—the role of furthering popular welfare. Secondly, they must maintain a high standard of efficiency and integrity. Thirdly, they must be harmonised among themselves and must reach a working compromise. Fourthly, the social control must be so exercised as not to stifle the springs of popular initiative

and liberty. All this is to be secured, at least partly, by the State which, as pointed out above, enjoys a primacy among associations. But the state by itself is not quite adequate to the task. The political government alone does not always command the knowledge, judgment and prestige requisite for a role of this character and magnitude. Besides, the Government, as the most powerful of all agencies of control, is itself in need of that supervision which in its turn it is expected to exercise over others.

Supervision of this supreme character cannot come from any association. It can come only from Public Opinion. The force of opinion in general springs from the elemental facts of associated life. There is scarcely any one who can afford to be completely indifferent to the opinion of others. He may disregard the opinion of any particular group and also of the majority but there is a circle of his own for the opinion of which he cares. Usually, people try to win the approval of those with whom they come into contact, or those whom they have learnt to respect, or those who constitute their personal 'world'. Those entrusted with social control cannot disregard the opinions and standards of *all* those with whom they have to associate. If a current of opinion were shared by all the people or even a majority of the people, it would not fail to make itself felt in the seats of control. It is, then, with opinion that supervision of all civic agencies rests in the last resort.

The foregoing exposition of the various factors in civic life has referred many times to public opinion as prescribing standards of public conduct and assisting the formulation of policies. Public Opinion plays a role of the first importance in all social regulation, specially under democratic

The importance of  
Public Opinion.

forms. Democratic government has often been described as government by public opinion. In the working of central as well as of local institutions public opinion enters at numberless points. It is, therefore, necessary to inquire what the genesis of public opinion is and what a citizen is expected to do in regard to its formation.

As the term indicates, public opinion relates to the public. Strictly speaking, the term cannot be applied to opinion

The Public.

entertained only by sections of the citizen body, for instance, by particular classes, sects, associations etc. Public opinion is the opinion of the whole body of citizens. But here a difficulty presents itself. It is rarely that the whole body of citizens are unanimous on any matter. If we use the term in the strictest sense, we find public opinion an event of rare occurrence. It is, however, possible to suggest an alternative criterion.

It may be defined as a concern for the welfare of the whole public, rather than of any particular sections alone.

Criterion of Public  
Opinion.

Opinion may be regarded as truly public when it is motivated by a regard for the welfare of the whole of society.

Opinion which centres round the special interests or the special privileges of any religious group, any one class, or any one association can be described as sectional opinion. It cannot be described as public opinion. It is thus clear that public opinion is not necessarily identical with the opinion of the majority. If the majority forms an opinion without equal regard or reference to the interests and welfare of any minorities, that is to say, without genuine regard or reference to the welfare of the *whole* community, the opinion is that of the majority, but it is not public opinion. Similarly, if a minority forms an opinion regardless of the interests of

the majority, regardless, that is to say, of the interests of the *whole* community, the opinion is group opinion. It is not *public* opinion.

An ideal situation would arise if an opinion were entertained by the whole community on the basis of the welfare of the whole. It would be disinterested, being free from motives of personal or sectional advantage. It would, so to say, represent what Rousseau, the French philosopher of the eighteenth century, called the General Will of the community. It would be *public*, both in the sense of being entertained by the whole people and in the sense of being concerned with the welfare of the whole.

The ideal situation, however, rarely materialises. It is, therefore, important to note how far the practical manifestations of opinion approximate to the standard. Social life is the theatre of a large variety of opinions, held by various groups or even individuals, and inspired by different interests ranging from those of the whole community to those of a sect, a class, a fortuitous group, or just a single family. These opinions clash with one another: they influence one another and compromise with one another. Nor does any section of society always entertain the same opinion. Opinions change with the times,—with the rise of new needs, new classes, new ideas, in fact, with every fresh equilibrium of social and political forces. Long pent-up feelings and movements sometimes come to the surface and rush with the force of a torrent. Then opinions correspond to the prevailing tension and excitement. While some are enthusiastic for the new ideas and upheavals, others are violently opposed to them.

There are two risks to which these trends of opinion are

exposed. It has already been pointed out that opinions are liable to be formed on considerations of Risk to Opinion.

groups as distinct from the entire community. The second risk is that opinions may be formed on the basis of inadequate or incorrect information, invalid surmises or inferences, faulty judgment and lack of insight into affairs. Whenever opinion succumbs to these risks, there arise misunderstandings which mar the harmony of public life and which occasionally lead to violent explosions.

The risks are serious because of the kind of life which the average person leads at present in towns or villages. His thoughts are absorbed mostly by his vocation, his family and his limited circle of friends and relations. He may have a few diversions and share some prejudices, opinions and enthusiasms current among his associates. But he has scarcely a correct notion of the wider world of which he forms a part and which, in spite of him, influences his destiny. He does not travel much. Even if he does, he does not know how to study the life of the new regions he visits. He does not usually meet people who differ from him in range of intellect, ideas or experience. He reads little and there is nothing to guarantee that the newspaper or pamphlet which falls into his hands correctly reports or judges of events. As to his sympathies, he readily falls in with the traditions of the family and the group of which he happens to be a member. If these traditions are narrow, the average man's sympathies are often limited to the circle of his immediate associates, class and sect. He has neither the leisure, nor the opportunity, to acquire a wider outlook, a real knowledge of public transactions and problems. Nor is the environment favourable to the expansion of his sympathies.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion*.

The result is that in normal times many people are apathetic towards public matters. When they do intervene off and on, they are liable to fall victim to those who trade on their prejudices, their fears and their ignorance. They fail to understand that the vote is a sacred trust always to be exercised for the public good. They throw it away for flattery, empty promises or some sordid material consideration. Or they allow themselves to be influenced by friends, relations, priests or by those who have it in their power to benefit or injure them. Among those who do take an active and more or less continuous interest in politics, there are some who espouse the cause of particular sections and, by pandering to their narrow prejudices and narrow aspirations, become their leaders. Hence, social cleavages are widened and fresh antagonisms created. There are others who play their own game and create platforms on whatever basis comes easy to hand.

Some are inspired by lofty motives of public welfare but do not possess the requisite knowledge of, and insight into, the complicated affairs of the modern world. They formulate or support programmes which, though well-intentioned, are not calculated to improve the cultural or material conditions of the people to any appreciable extent. The opinion which rallies to their support may force some advance but this may turn out to be out of all proportion to the energy and enthusiasm expended thereon. On the other hand, there are some who, by dint of intelligence, study, observation and experience, understand the situation accurately but who lack the energy to convert others to their views or the organising capacity to form a party on a broad and enlightened programme. There remains at present only



a small percentage of persons who steer clear of individual or sectional advantage, who concentrate on truly *public* welfare, and who actively try to bring an enlightened and disinterested opinion into being. They count for something and occasionally succeed in giving a *public* turn to opinion but only too often is their influence neutralized by those who assiduously cultivate sectional opinion.

It is patent that these conditions must alter before currents of genuinely *public* opinion can have a free run. To

Public Opinion  
and Social Reorgani-  
sation.

use a mathematical term, truly civic opinion is a function of truly civic organisation. In practice, the two must march together. Every improvement in institutions enhances the chances of the emergence of *public* opinion. Every step in the enlightenment of opinion improves the chances of truly civic organisation. At all costs it is necessary to lift the average person out of the rut into which he moves at present. He must be equipped with some knowledge and leisure and be furnished with facilities of reading, travel and participation in the wider life. In proportion as he gets out of his "shut-in" life, will he exercise a beneficial influence on the tone of public opinion.

The interplay of the currents of public and sectional opinions, enlightened and erroneous opinions, group ambi-

Newspapers.

tions and individual ambitions is well reflected in the press and in the platforms of parties. These are among the most powerful agencies for the formation and expression of opinion. There are some newspapers which faithfully report all events of public significance, and which try, with knowledge and judgment, to analyse their bearing on public welfare. The weight of their editorial columns is thrown on the side of truth, justice and progress. But many newspapers fall short of this stand-

ard. The crucial fact is that a newspaper is partly, if not mainly, a commercial proposition. It has to make both ends meet, and, if possible, to make a profit. It looks to its circulation and to other sources of income. It is tempted to advocate the special interests, and express the particular views, of the class which supplies Advertisements to its pages. It may receive open or secret subsidies from wealthy landlords, merchants, financiers, and industrialists. Or it may make itself the mouthpiece of a class or group and make sure of a large circulation within its ranks. Most people like to read in their newspapers what they are themselves thinking or what at least accords with their predilections. Different newspapers, accordingly, cater to the tastes of different groups. They have also been known to fan passing breezes of excitement. It will be observed that the tone of newspapers is set by the standards of their likely readers or by the wealthier classes. There is yet another influence which deserves notice. Governments have been known to influence newspapers. Sometimes they may pass stringent laws to control the publication of news and comments in newspapers. Secondly, they may grant subsidies to some newspapers or favour them with Government advertisements. Thirdly, they may secretly influence the policy and views of the proprietors or editors of newspapers, specially in regard to foreign affairs and high politics in general.

The cumulative effect of these various factors is perceptible in the publication of news as well as of views. Many newspapers select, display and "edit" news so as to meet the pleasure, or at least to avoid the displeasure, of government, or of particular capitalists, or of particular classes of the community, or of the public in general. In this process, part of the truth is sometimes suppressed, false suggestions

are sometimes made and exaggeration in one direction or another is the order of the day. Editorial comment is influenced still more profoundly by the same factors. Every morning the organs of various interests draw diametrically opposite conclusions from the same facts. Facts are not allowed to speak for themselves; they are pressed into the service of preconceived notions. In addition to all this, the discussion of public affairs is conducted on a plane low enough for the average reader of the class which the paper serves. Again, too many columns are sometimes devoted to sports and fashion for the sake of those who are absorbed in the superficial adornments and amusements of life. What is worse, crime and misconduct are sometimes reported too graphically and at too great length for the sake of those whose curiosity has taken a morbid turn.

It is thus easy to perceive that the press often fails to enlighten opinion and sometimes positively perverts it. The formation of right opinion depends, among other factors, on an adequate supply of authentic news. If the public is denied free access to full facts, it is deprived of the means of forming a correct judgment. To mutilate news is to poison the springs of opinion. Then there are numerous persons who lack the requisite training, energy or leisure to form an independent opinion and who therefore borrow opinions from newspapers. They are grievously misled by editorial comments which happen to depart from the canon of truth and sound reasoning. Nor should it be forgotten that sectional views, expressed intemperately, rouse antagonism in some quarters and fan the passions. This sectionalism in newspapers means that they fail to exercise their proper influence in broadening the average reader's sympathies on which, as we have seen, the emergence of a genuine public

The Press and Public Opinion.

opinion partly depends.

It is not implied in this criticism that the press is an unmitigated curse. It has already been pointed out that

The Advantages of the Press. there are some able, honest and independent newspapers. Secondly, in spite of

all their shortcomings, newspapers as a whole do bring the average person into contact with the world at large and widen his mental horizon. The reader's knowledge of public affairs is increased. As the range of his mind and his interests is widened, there arises a chance for the expansion of his sympathies. Besides, many readers learn to make allowance for at least some of the factors which influence newspapers. Those who are in the habit of reading several papers advocating different views find their minds stimulated by their differences. Thus, the cause of public opinion is aided to a certain extent.

All these considerations apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to periodical magazines, pamphlets on current affairs, and more

Periodical Literature. serious books which discuss public matters. They are subject, though in slightly

different measures, to the same risks and are calculated to render the same type of service and disservice to public opinion. Government censorship, the influence of wealth, aristocratic patronage, popular flattery, sectionalism, theological rancour and national prejudices have been known to affect magazine articles, pamphlets and even historical and philosophical writings. The chief difference between their position and that of the daily or weekly press is that, on the whole, they probe deeper into social problems, serve the better educated classes and usually take a more independent line. They influence the views of many of those on whom the responsibilities of political life and the task of influencing mass opinion fall.

The third powerful agency in moulding public opinion is the activities of party organisations. They organise meet-

ings, issue leaflets, select questions and candidates for presentation to the electorate and succeed in rousing a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement. They influence opinion, specially at those crucial moments when decisions are taken by large bodies of persons. The bases of party and its uses and abuses have already been touched on and need not be dealt with again. It is only necessary to point out, with specific reference to opinion, that the latter is liable to be swept along by party. Opinion is thus influenced for the good by party to the extent that it is based on considerations of general, as distinct from sectional, welfare and to the extent that it stands for an enlightened policy. On the other hand, opinion is influenced for the worse by party to the extent that the latter is based on sectionalism and advocates an erroneous policy. The tone of parties is usually set by the standards, prejudices and aspirations of those whose suffrage they seek.

In regard to opinion, then, newspapers, current literature and party organisations are two-edged swords. They

may be conducive to the formation of a genuine public opinion or they may generate and sustain sectional opinions. They may enlighten opinion, informing it with a true understanding of the social forces; or they may merely confirm the prevailing prejudices and notions of various groups. Where shall we look for safeguards against the risks to which opinion is subject?

✓ { It is clear that a genuinely public opinion will emerge, *inter alia*, in proportion to permeation of social arrangements by the spirit of justice, the redress of griev-

ances and the reconciliation of social differences. The greater the social harmony, the easier the

formation of public opinion. Next to this social reform, education is the most potent factor in forestalling the dangers to which opinion is subject. So much has already been

Education. said about the necessity of education, the right to education and the duties of the

state and local boards in regard to it that here we need only discuss its direct bearing on opinion. Education can, indeed, be perverted into an inculcation of specific dogmas. But to the extent that it opens the mind, trains the judgment, imparts correct information, and widens the outlook, it assists the emergence of public opinion. The higher the standards of general education, the higher will be the tone and level of newspapers, periodical literature and also of party activities. Once again, education up to the age of fifteen or sixteen ought to be compulsory for every boy and every girl in every society. Beyond it, the more widely is higher education diffused, the greater the number of those who seek to guide opinion on right lines. Education would also steady the judgment and diminish the chances of the public being swept off its feet by excitement. Higher education would also enable a larger number of readers to detect fallacies in the arguments of journalists, authors and politicians and allow for their various biases.

At the same time some efforts are needed directly to reform the instruments of moulding and formulating opinion.

Cultivation of the Social Sciences. If the social sciences are cultivated intensively in the universities, it may be possible to produce a large number of journalists and writers on public affairs with the requisite intellectual background, training and stock of ideas. There will arise, at the same time, numbers of readers, who would expect a high standard of writers and speakers on public affairs. Learned societies can undertake the study of public

questions in a scientific spirit and publish the relevant facts and figures and the proposed solutions for general information. Sociological literature of this character would serve as an invaluable antidote to purely partisan opinion. Similarly, party organisations should be reformed. Their control should not be allowed to fall into the hands of cliques. Patronage which attracts adventurers into politics should be taken out of the hands of politicians and entrusted to Public Service Commissions beyond the reach of party majorities and ministers.

It will thus be possible in an increasing measure to free opinion from the dangers of ignorance, narrowness and foul play. An enlightened public opinion will understand, what sectional and erroneous opinion fails to grasp, that the welfare of the whole society, in fact, of the whole world, is bound together. It will concentrate its force, not on sectional interests and privileges, but on questions like universal education, universal economic well-being, universal improvement in health, sanitation etc., in short on the happiness of all, on opportunity of self-realisation to all. It will rely, not on prejudice and passion, but on reason and sympathy. It will insist on a high standard of knowledge, integrity and public spirit in all those who occupy positions of responsibility. It will not, it is true, be able to pronounce on the details of policy, on the clauses of a bill, or on the propriety of specific executive acts. This is the work of experts and cannot be performed by the average man with the limited leisure and knowledge at his disposal. But what public opinion can do is to decide what party of statesmen are to be installed in power at a given juncture. It should be able to decide what general policy is to be embodied in legislation

The role of Public Opinion.

and administration. The apathy which political observers have lamented will be largely overcome with the diffusion of education, and leisure and participation in political responsibility.



## CHAPTER XI

### THE CIVIC LIFE

CIVICS, like its hand-maid Politics or Economics, is both a science and an art. Not only does it investigate social phenomena but it also suggests improvements.

The Quality of Life. It seeks to improve the quality of life, not for the few or the many,

but for all, for men, women and children alike, without distinction of race, colour, creed or caste. It points out what are the best conditions for the civic life and what efforts should be made to bring them about. It recognises that institutions are bound to differ in their forms from place to place but it insists that there are certain common principles which should govern the relations of men everywhere on earth so as to maintain a high quality of life.

The civic life is a co-operative enterprise in every sense of the term. It is possible only to men living together.

Human Reciprocity. To a person bereft of all contact with his fellow-men, there is no question of

civic life, of morals, or of politics. Civic life is based on human interdependence. Men think of themselves as standing in various relations to one another and perform various services for one another. The great philosopher Emmanuel Kant uttered a profound truth when he declared that every man is to be regarded as an end unto himself. The idea is that the happiness of every single individual should count in social arrangements. No one is to be regarded as a mere means to the happiness of others. He

has as good a right to self-realisation as any one else. But men have to live together and seek their self-realisation in association with one another. They depend on one another for conveniences, comforts, and for moral development. . It is thus possible to supplement Kant's dogma by saying that persons are both ends and means to one another.

In a yet deeper sense it is true to say that men are interdependent in regard to the quality of life. The good life can be secure and certain for some only on condition that it is also secured to others. A few illustrations will make the point clear. In a village or a city a few families may try to live a perfectly hygienic and healthy life. They can succeed to a certain degree but they will never be free from risks of ill-health until the whole habitation is raised to a high level of sanitation. The germs of diseases travel from a dirty to the cleanest locality and can attack any one. Small-pox, cholera, the plague etc., have been known to spread not only from one part of a town to another, but also from district to district and country to country. The germs find a favourable breeding ground in some exceptionally insanitary place but they multiply so fast that they spread over extensive areas. The surest protection against disease is to eradicate everywhere those conditions which form the starting-point of maladies. In the last resort, the health of a family depends on that of all others.

Education furnishes another illustration of interdependence. It is calculated to liberate the mind but if some people are educated and their neighbours uneducated, the result is that the former are also dragged down. They may not be able to free themselves from superstitious customs and erroneous views which obtain currency among the

Interdependence in  
the Quality of Life.

Educational Inter-  
dependence.

mass of the uneducated. They may find their projects of reform blocked by the inertia of the illiterate. Or they may themselves be tempted to exploit the prejudices of the un-instructed mass in a bid for leadership. So frequently does all this happen that some people lose faith in education. They are depressed at the spectacle of educated men proving false to their trust and jump to the conclusion that education scarcely does good to society. But the fault lies not with education in some but with want of education in others. Education yields the best results when it is universal and when there is no question of the educated being swamped by the uneducated. It is clear that in regard to education there is a close interdependence in society.

Economic Inter-  
dependence.      any one that the economic betterment of one group often depends on that of others. Thus, if the labourers in one factory receive higher wages than those doing the same kind of work in another factory, the result will be that the former factory will be undercut by the latter. It may suffer loss or at any rate be doomed to a much lower rate of profit. Its proprietors will, therefore, be constantly tempted to lower the wages of their men to the level of the competing firm. Similarly, if some people are ready to work for less than others, the latter will also be forced down sooner or later. A rise in wages is secure only if it is general. If, for instance, the state fixed minimum wages for the operatives of factories, or if the workers combined to fix a minimum for themselves, the wages could be maintained on a uniformly high level. The same considerations apply to hours of work. A factory which works its operatives for shorter hours than others finds itself undercut by them and is constrained to

reconsider the situation. But if uniform hours are fixed for all factories, none can steal a march over others. Similarly, if all the shopkeepers in a market open at eight in the morning and close at six in the evening, there is no question of unfair advantage on the part of any one. But if some of them begin at seven and are at it till seven, the rest have to follow suit, so that the hours of work are prolonged, and those of leisure cut down, for all.

The interdependence which is patent in the realms of public health, education and economic well-being, manifests itself, sometimes in a very subtle manner, in social traditions. Roughly, traditions are to a society what habits are to the individual. They constitute codes of social behaviour. Most people readily fall in with the traditions which govern the life around them. They imbibe the spirit of the group with whom their lot may be cast. Their character develops mainly in response to the stimulus from the environment of which the traditions form an important part. Their interests and aspirations are similarly determined largely by the traditions around them.<sup>1</sup> As it were, one breathes the social traditions with the air. By dint of thinking and moral effort, one may partly free oneself from their influence but none can hope to escape them entirely. The few who may regard

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<sup>1</sup> A number of sociologists have scientifically studied "the influence of a neighbourhood on man's physical, mental, and moral characteristics . . . Studies of Charles Booth, B. S. Rowntree, R. O. McKewzie, J. Williams, E. W. Burgess, R. A. Woods, W. J. Thomas and other investigators, have thrown a great deal of light on the effects of the neighbourhood on man's traits, behaviour, and psychology. Now we are reasonably certain that among the many factors which shape a personality, the agency of the neighbourhood in which a man was born and reared must be taken into consideration. . . ." Sorokin, *Contemporary Sociological Theories*, p. 717.

themselves as emancipated have constantly to rub shoulders with those who are in the grip of the traditions,—of the customary ways of thought and behaviour.

Now, these traditions are the outcome of cumulative thought and practice—of various interactions of people in society. They determine the status of groups, and mark out the lines on which social life moves. They are capable of change; as a matter of fact they do change in response to new needs, new incidence of wealth, new ideas and movements. But sometimes they change too slowly and sometimes in the wrong direction. The social need is that traditions should not lag unduly behind the times, and that they should be capable of ready adaptation to the changing environment. For instance, it is necessary to revise traditions when society is passing from the rural to the urban stage, from the agricultural to the industrial stage. It is necessary to revise the received social etiquette when the emancipation of women turns exclusively male society into mixed gatherings. In mixed society, it is doubly necessary to emphasise purity and a noble tone in conversation. It is necessary to cultivate social decorum and a certain reserve and distance. In societies in which men and women do not mix together, it is usual for one to speak to others without any introduction or much of formality. But as mixed society develops with the emancipation of women, it is desirable to adopt the etiquette, well-known in England and elsewhere, that one is not to speak to another without formal introduction. A certain degree of formality must be observed between acquaintances of the opposite sexes. In periods of transition it occasionally happens that some people are torn away from the inherited traditions and fail to catch up with an alternative set of traditions or to build up principles for

Revision of Traditions.

themselves. They find themselves adrift at sea and fall victim to listlessness, trivialities and superficialities. They find scarcely anything worth living for and dying for. Such a spectacle of uprooted individuals leads many to dread all change and to cling the more tenaciously to the heritage of the past. But the fault here does not lie necessarily with the change. The tragedy is that the traditions have not been adapted to the new situation and new principles have not been thought out.

But traditions, by their very nature, can change readily enough and rightly only with general enlightenment and progressive attitude. For its general texture of life, society depends on the mental and moral attitudes of its members at large.

Since that general texture affects every one, it is correct to hold that every one is dependent on the rest for the general scheme within which he is to live his life. Conversely, every one has some power to influence the conditions under which all are to live.

The fact of interdependence is the central fact in social life. There follows from it a conclusion of the utmost importance. It is that effort and organisation should be directed to the welfare

The Civic Life. of the whole of society. Conditions favourable to progress, happiness and self-realisation should be placed within the reach of all. Education should be imparted to all and every one should be lifted above poverty. If there are any patches of ignorance, squalor and indigence, they affect the tenor of the life of practically every citizen. If the mass is sunk in ignorance and poverty, the level of life will be brought down even for those who appear to be the favoured few. There is thus a sense in which we can speak of society as possessing a unity. In this sense society can be called an organism. The

true social interest consists in maximising the welfare of the whole of society. This, as we have seen, is also the dictate of justice. The civic life is that type of associated life in which every one so orders his activities as not to hamper the chances of self-realisation and, what is equally important, actively promotes such chances. The civic life thus turns out to be a life of the service of all by all on the principle of general welfare.

It is in the light of this truth that social institutions should function. Civic organisation in the deepest sense of the term is the organisation built on the basis of the common good as distinct from the exclusively sectional good. It

Principles of Civic  
organisation.

implies that the family, while looking to its own welfare, should not ride roughshod over the interest of others. Every one should earn his livelihood without taking undue advantage of the position of others. Similarly, every association should so conduct its activities as not to injure the welfare of others. The state, in particular, should impartially promote the interests of all its citizens and also co-operate with other states in the cause of world welfare. A French philosopher D'Alembert said. "I prefer my family to myself, my country to my family and humanity to my country". But if society were rightly ordered, there would arise no questions of preference. The individual would find his welfare, and that of his family and country and of humanity harmonised in a single synthesis. Every one should cultivate a broad vision, a catholic sympathy, and a general helpfulness. Every one should feel interested in social welfare and consistently keep it in view.

The Civic life and organisation rest not merely on general enlightenment but also on a high average of charac-

ter. Character is essentially social in its make-up. Its essence is a spontaneous regard for the welfare and happiness of others. Its climax is a readiness to work and suffer for the sake of the general welfare. Its force consists as much in the volume of performance as in the example it sets. It rises above all pettiness, jealousy, grossness, and vanity because these, besides inflicting specific harm, vitiate the social traditions and mar the social harmony and co-operation. It will be observed that true character is not static but dynamic. It consists not merely in harmlessness but in active well-doing. The worst of many so-called good men is that they are 'wooden'. They do not stir out to combat evil and energetically to promote the good. It means that their character is only half-developed. A social tragedy is enacted if good men are content with the passive role. Character at its highest is socialised energy. In proportion as men and women approach this standard, is the civic ideal realised.

But it is a mistake to suppose that the character of a whole people can be raised to a high standard merely through exhortation. Precept has its use; example is even more potent. Many individuals do attain moral excellence through moral effort. Every one should try to resist temptation and adopt a noble attitude toward life and its problems. But it is necessary to face facts. It must be understood that character is inevitably influenced by the environment, by social institutions and traditions. Many fail to rise above the conditions generated by ignorance and error, poverty and squalor, the strife of groups and their attempts to exploit one another. There are numerous young men who start life with noble aims and generous enthusiasms but the wider experience and reactions of the world chill their idealism and cool their

Character.

Character and the Environment.



ardour. They are 'disillusioned', fall into cynicism, or are at least dragged down to the common level. It is an error to ascribe such a change to the effect of age, or to ripening wisdom. Age and wisdom should really expand and not contract the sympathies. What happens in such cases is that the impact of narrow and exclusive traditions of privileged groups and associations, of contrast of luxury and poverty, tells, and assimilates the young mind to prevailing conditions. Accordingly, those who want to improve society should not be content merely with preaching character or setting an example of character. They should carefully examine social conditions and mobilise intellectual and moral forces to re-organise social, economic and political institutions on the bases of justice and equality of opportunity. This is the way to foster the civic life. It is the way not merely of individual uplift but also of institutional reform. It assigns due weight to the mortal factor but it cannot ignore the economic and political factors. It recognises that all the various aspects of social life are inextricably connected together. Life cannot be divided into water-tight compartments. An analysis of civic life supports the conclusion that improvement should proceed all along the line. Prof. Hobhouse says that "a social change of any kind is like a stone thrown into a pond. Waves of consequential change will radiate in all directions." But haphazard change involves a great deal of social waste. Change should therefore be well-thought out.

Civics lays emphasis on the performance of their duties by all but it also teaches that duties should be properly comprehended. The whole scheme of duties

The Duties of  
Citizens. has to be set in a wide social perspective.

The citizen's duty is not exhausted with obedience to the law and voting at elections. He should,

so far as lies in his power, understand the social problems and contribute to their solution. Whatever his station in life, he should endeavour to promote the welfare of society. If he happens to be a public functionary, his duty is to minister to the public interest to the best of his ability. He should be proof against all partiality, all temptation, all selfishness. If the citizen happens to be a manufacturer or a merchant, he should think primarily of supplying a public need in the most efficient manner and only secondarily of his profits. If he happens to be a lawyer, physician or teacher, he should similarly look upon his position primarily as an opportunity of participating in the fulfilment of some essential social function. The citizen should find in his vocation room for the expression of his personality. A living sense of social service is part of that expression. The civic life consists in that harmonious living where the expression of personality and social service are fused together. No longer there remains any opposition between living for oneself and living for society. There is a profound truth in the saying of Condorcet; "Live for others: it is only then one lives for oneself." One finds one's highest good in the common good. This is the civic solution of the problem of life. It depends on the deepening of the *social consciousness* as something wider than the family or group consciousness. It is this *social consciousness* which lies at the base of social efficiency.



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